

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Case Study no. 9: Volume 2

The provision of residential care in boarding schools for children at **Morrison's Academy**, Crieff, between 1945 and 2007

Evidential Hearings: 24 March 2021 to 12 May 2021



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| Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

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Morrison's Academy: former pupils and staff

In order to provide the reader with a clear understanding of those whose names feature throughout these findings, I have included quick reference tables, Table 1 (former pupils) and Table 2 (former staff).

Table 1: Former pupils who provided evidence to SCAI

Name	Time at Morrison's
'Wallace'	1947-51
Alasdair Liddle	1950-4
'Bill'	1950-65
'Anna'	1954-8
'Robert'	1957-69
'Jack'	1957-70
'Colin'	1958-68
'Thompson'	1961-4
'Geoff'	1963-8
Iain Leighton	1963-70
'Lindsay'	1963-70
'Cillian'	1965-75
'John'	1967-72
'Angus'	1967-75
'Jane'	1968-73
'George'	1969-74
'Gregor'	1976-85
'Lewis'	1977-82
'Polly'	1979-85
'Anna'	1986-93

Table 2: Former staff who provided evidence to SCAI

Name	Period of employment	Role
Gareth Edwards	1996-2001	Former rector
Simon Pengelley	2004-15	Former rector
Gareth Warren	2015-21	Former rector

Foreword

These are the eleventh of my published case study findings and they relate to the provision of residential care for children at Morrison's Academy (hereafter Morrison's), Crieff, one of the boarding schools investigated in the overall boarding schools case study and explored in the course of public hearings.

During the hearings, I heard evidence about aspects of the boarding provision for children at Morrison's that amounted to abuse. I have also considered and taken account of evidence in statements signed by applicants after hearings had finished. I am very grateful to all who rose to the challenge of engaging with the Inquiry, whether former pupils, former staff, or others. Their willingness to cooperate, assist, and contribute accounts of their experiences was welcome and invaluable. Some also provided evidence of their wider experiences, ideas, and learning, thinking to the future. For example, Gareth Warren, rector of Morrison's at the time he gave evidence, said:

As a school, we view this as a very difficult, challenging time to hear of our failings, and understand the pain that it caused to those that suffered, and we view our participation as a commitment to wishing to find solutions for the greater good and the whole, and again to say that we are sorry to all those who suffered from our failings.¹

In responding to that part of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference (ToR) that directs me to investigate the 'extent' of any abuse, I require to consider the entirety of children's experiences, including any non-abusive aspects, and I have done so in this case study. At Morrison's, there were children who

had positive experiences which they value to this day, even if they also suffered abuse, and my findings reflect that.

In reaching the stage of publication of these findings - from detailed analysis of all the witness and documentary evidence ingathered to the final document - I have once more had the benefit of being supported by the exceptional teamwork that has become the hallmark of this Inquiry. I must record my gratitude to the Inquiry counsel who led in the case study and the members of staff involved at each stage; I do not take their remarkable diligence and commitment for granted.

Applicants and other witnesses continue to come forward with relevant evidence about boarding schools and this will be considered as part of a continuing process.

I would encourage anyone who has relevant information on any aspect of our work to get in touch with our witness support team. We want to hear from you.



Lady Smith

¹ [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015-21), at TRN-8-000000006, pp.143-4. Throughout its existence Morrison's Academy headmasters were known as rectors. In these findings, headmaster and rector will be used interchangeably.

Preface

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI)

SCAI's Terms of Reference (ToR) require it to 'investigate the nature and extent of abuse of children in care in Scotland' during the period from within living memory to 17 December 2014 and to create a national public record and commentary on abuse of children in care in Scotland during that period.

The requirement is to investigate sexual, physical, psychological, and emotional abuse and, at my discretion, other types of abuse including unacceptable practices (such as deprivation of contact with siblings) and neglect. There is also a requirement to make findings about the impact of abuse.

SCAI is also to consider the extent to which any form of abuse arose from failures in duty by those with responsibility for the protection of children in care. In particular, SCAI is required to consider whether any abuse arose from systemic failures and the extent to which any such failures have been addressed. It is to make findings and recommendations for the effective protection of children in care now and in the future.

A copy of SCAI's ToR is at Appendix A.

'Applicant' is the term SCAI uses for a person who tells SCAI that (s)he was abused in circumstances that fall within the ToR.

Public hearings

In common with other public inquiries, the work of SCAI includes public hearings. They take place after detailed investigations, research, analysis, and preparation have been completed by SCAI counsel and SCAI staff. That stage can take a long time. The public hearings of SCAI include - importantly - the taking of oral evidence from individuals about their experiences as children in care and the reading of a selection of evidence from some of their written statements. The evidence also includes accounts of the impact of their having been abused as children in care, including in boarding schools.

A relatively small number of applicants came forward to the Inquiry to share their experiences as pupils at Morrison's Academy. Preparations for the boarding schools case study hearings were underway when the COVID-19 global pandemic began to impact on Scotland. It seems likely that the restrictions imposed as a consequence contributed to there being fewer applicants in relation to Morrison's than might otherwise have been expected. However, those who did come forward provided important evidence of not only their own experiences, but those of other children who were subject to the same regime.

During and following the evidential hearings in case studies, applicants and other witnesses have continued to come forward with further relevant evidence. In the case of Morrison's, applicant evidence received during and following the evidential hearings has been taken into account in my considerations for the purpose of these findings. The evidence of any other former pupils and other witnesses who may still come forward will be carefully considered by SCAI as part of a continuing process.

Section 21 responses

Under section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005, as Chair of this Inquiry, I have the power to require persons to provide evidence to SCAI. As part of its investigations, SCAI issues various section 21 notices to institutions and organisations on which we are focusing. These notices include requiring them to respond in writing to questions posed by the SCAI team. These questions are divided into parts: Part A - Organisation; Part B - Current Statement; Part C - Prevention and Identification; Part D - Abuse and Response. Hereafter these will be referred to as 'Parts A-D section 21 notice'. Such section 21 notices were issued to Morrison's.

Morrison's responded to Parts A-D section 21 notice. The responses to Parts A and B² and Parts C and D³ are dated 25 January 2017. SCAI also requested further information from Morrison's. This was provided in responses dated 4 December 2019,⁴ 3 March 2020,⁵ 24 July 2020,⁶ 2 October 2020,⁷ and 30 October 2020.⁸

Private sessions

Applicants and other witnesses can tell members of the SCAI team about their experiences as children in care and any other relevant evidence at a 'private session'. They are supported throughout this process by SCAI's witness support team. After the private session, a statement is prepared covering those matters spoken about which are relevant to the ToR. The applicant, or other witness, is asked to check the statement carefully and to sign it if satisfied that it is accurate, but only if and when (s)he feels ready to do so.

This case study

The scope and purpose of this part of the boarding schools case study was to consider evidence about:

- the nature and extent of any relevant abuse at Morrison's
- any of Morrison's relevant systems, policies and procedures, their application and their effectiveness
- any related matters.

Leave to appear

Leave to appear, insofar as relevant to Morrison's, was granted to the following:

- Morrison's Academy
- the Care Inspectorate
- the Scottish Social Services Council
- the General Teaching Council for Scotland
- Police Scotland
- the Lord Advocate
- the Scottish Ministers.

2 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003.

3 Morrison's Academy, [Parts C and D response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0053.

4 Morrison's Academy, Response to section 21 notice, index and Annex C, at MOR-000000001 and MOR-000000003.

5 Morrison's Academy, Former pupil details, at MOR-000000045.

6 Morrison's Academy, Pupils' placement, at MOR-000000049.

7 Morrison's Academy, Response to notice of 29 July 2020 and 19 August 2020, at MOR-000000050.

8 Morrison's Academy, Addendum to Part D response to section 21 notice, at MOR-000000055.

Numbers

The former pupils who have provided evidence to SCAI in relation to their time at Morrison's do not represent every person who has made a complaint over the years relating to their experiences at the school. It must also be appreciated that many former pupils have described not only what happened to them, but also the treatment they witnessed being afforded to other children. Appendices D and E set out, in relation to Morrison's, the numbers of:

- children who have boarded at Morrison's
- complaints of alleged abuse received by Morrison's
- civil actions raised against Morrison's
- relevant SCAI applicants to the date specified in Appendix E.

Witnesses representing Morrison's

Mr Gareth Warren who, at the time of the evidential hearings, was the rector of Morrison's, provided evidence to SCAI on behalf of the school on two occasions: 24 March 2021 and 20 May 2021.⁹

Morrison's

I find that children who boarded at Morrison's were exposed to risks of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse. For many, those risks materialised, and children were abused. That abuse had long-term impact.

This case study as compared to my findings in previous case studies

The abuse I find to have taken place at Morrison's is, in some respects, similar to the abuse I found to have taken place at Loretto School and the boarding schools run by the Benedictines and the Marist Brothers.¹⁰ There were also some similarities in relation to causative factors such as staff who lacked the appropriate skills and training; inappropriate recruitment policies; and insufficient oversight of pupils and teachers. Accordingly, I will at times use language in these findings similar to the language used in the findings in relation to those boarding schools.

9 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, pp.92–144; [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.59–75.

10 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, [Case Study no. 9](#), Volume 1: Loretto School; Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, [Case Study no. 5](#): The provision of residential care in boarding schools for children in Scotland by the Benedictine monks of Fort Augustus Abbey between 1948 and 1991 at Carlekemp Priory School, North Berwick, and Fort Augustus Abbey School, Inverness-shire (August 2021); and [Case Study no. 7](#): The provision of residential care in boarding schools for children in Scotland by the Marist Brothers between 1950 and 1983 at St Columba's College, Largs, and St Joseph's College, Dumfries (November 2021).

Terminology

Many children in care within the period covered by SCAI's Terms of Reference (ToR) experienced sexual, physical, and/or emotional abuse that was meted out by other children. Details of such abuse are set out in case study findings. It involved coercion, threats, aggression, all forms of bullying, and, typically, an imbalance of power - with that imbalance arising from a difference in age, ability, status, physical size, and/or physical strength. It often occurred in an environment where the culture facilitated rather than prevented such conduct or behaviour. Sometimes it involved children specifically targeting other children.

The terms 'children abused by other children', 'children who suffered abuse meted out by other children', 'children who engaged in abusive behaviour', and/or 'children who engaged in abusive conduct' are used in these findings when referring to such abusive conduct and/or behaviour.

The use of that terminology is not to be taken as indicating that I do not accept that it may have taken place against a background of the child who abused another child having exhibited harmful behaviour which needed to but had not been recognised and/or addressed and which may also have been harmful to them. Nor is it to be taken as indicating that I do not accept that the child who abused another child may have suffered prior trauma.

Many applicants described abuse of a type that could have amounted to a criminal offence. The language in these findings reflects the words they used in evidence, such as sodomy and oral sex. There is also mention of the contemporary common law offences, for example lewd, indecent, and libidinous practices and behaviour, an offence which involved the abuse, including on occasions penetrative conduct, of children under the age of puberty, then taken as 14 for boys and 12 for girls. Today, offences involving children would be prosecuted under the provisions of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, and any penetrative conduct involving a child, be it vaginal, anal, or oral, using a penis, would now likely be described as rape.

In the context of boarding schools, it should be noted that Part V of the 2009 Act introduced a new offence of sexual abuse of trust. It focuses on those who look after persons under the age of 18 in a school and engage in sexual activity with them.

Other terminology used in these findings includes the words 'clipe' and 'clipping'. A clipe is someone who informs on another or, to put it colloquially, tells tales. Clipping is the act of doing so. A person who clipe is breaking an unwritten code of silence and may be isolated by their peers if (s)he does so.

Summary

- Children were abused at Morrison's.
- For decades, Morrison's harboured a culture of violence and emotional abuse.
- When boarding was established at Morrison's in 1880, the ability to educate children was assumed to include an ability to provide appropriate residential care for them. That was an erroneous assumption and it prevailed for much of the time boarding existed at the school.
- It was assumed that allowing teachers, and others, to operate private boarding houses, without apparent supervision or oversight, would be appropriate. That was not a safe assumption to make.
- Some members of staff at Morrison's abused children, both in the school and in the boarding houses.
- The abuse was primarily physical and emotional, but there was also sexual abuse.
- Corporal punishment was used excessively and inappropriately by staff. It was even used in advance of misbehaviour taking place. On occasion, teachers indulged in mass beatings. Some children were subjected to assaults to injury by teachers.
- Morrison's response to excessive and inappropriate corporal punishment was inadequate.
- One teacher - James Flett - was renowned amongst the pupils for breaking a boy's wrist when belting him. Whilst barred from hitting children with implements (at a time when the use of implements was still, otherwise, permitted at Morrison's), James Flett continued to physically abuse pupils by hitting or grabbing them by the hair. He continued working and was feted for his teaching skills up until his departure from the school in 1974. He should have been monitored more closely.
- Some teachers mocked and belittled their pupils.
- Four teachers were reported to have touched children inappropriately or made sexual comments that were offensive and upsetting to pupils.
- Boarding houses were, until the 1990s, not subject to adequate oversight by the school management. They could operate as separate 'fiefdoms' where the character of the housemaster or housemistress determined the character of the house for good or ill.
- Some of the boarding houses were privately owned and run; they were not subject to any system of oversight. Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association (MABHA), which was independent of the school and operated between 1933 and 1977, never actively considered children's welfare.
- Far too often, houses were poorly run and poorly managed by ill-equipped and inappropriate housemasters and housemistresses who allowed abuse to become endemic.
- All three of the main boys' houses - Academy, Dalmhor, and Glenearn - were places where physically and emotionally abusive cultures were allowed to flourish for lengthy periods between the 1950s and the 1980s.

- Some children at Morrison's engaged in abusive conduct towards other children, principally in the boarding houses.
- Abusive physical violence was carried out by prefects within the school. They also engaged in emotional abuse by imposing inappropriate non-corporal punishment.
- Pupils included a significant number of children whose parents lived abroad; they were particularly vulnerable to abusive conduct by other children.
- There was inadequate supervision by staff. Many did not notice, or make adequate enquiries about, the welfare of their pupils. A few chose to ignore it. There was no formal system in place to ensure consistency in the approach to child welfare across the houses.
- A strong tradition and culture of not reporting abuse existed within Morrison's. Typically, children would not clipe and those who did suffered at the hands of their fellow pupils. Children were not encouraged to speak up or share concerns.
- Staff interaction overall, even when well-intended, was limited in the houses. House staff typically had other responsibilities, such as teaching, sport, and commitments to their own families, and were, accordingly, overstretched.
- Some housemasters and, on occasion, their wives used excessive and inappropriate corporal punishment.
- A few staff humiliated and emotionally abused their pupils in the boarding houses.
- The majority of corporal punishment within the boarding houses was inappropriately delegated to prefects who had no training.
- Corporal punishment was regularly administered by prefects in the houses unjustifiably, for trivial breaches of rules.
- The culture at Morrison's was one where excessive corporal punishment was the norm for any transgression - no matter how minor - until the 1970s. After 1974, as apparently instructed by the new headmaster, the excessive use of corporal punishment of pupils by pupils should have stopped entirely. However, that did not happen until the 1980s.
- There was a lack of staff oversight and review of the administration of corporal punishment by older boys over decades. No guidance was given. No guidelines were issued.
- The system of empowering older boys at Morrison's to discipline younger ones created a real risk of bullying and abuse which, in many cases, came to pass. Bullying, with associated physical abuse inflicted on younger boys by older boys, was a constant at Morrison's throughout much of the twentieth century.
- Some children described living in fear all the time, waiting for the next episode of abuse to begin.
- A few older pupils engaged in sexually abusive conduct against younger children in the boarding houses.
- Whilst 'fagging', in the traditional sense of a junior pupil being allocated to a particular senior, was part of Morrison's culture and was not seen by many as abusive, it could become so. Younger pupils who failed to perform tasks for older pupils could be physically and emotionally abused.

- Whilst there were some examples of good leadership, particularly after 1995, before then the school suffered – badly at times – from periods of poor leadership. Abuse was not detected or appropriately dealt with. Systems for child protection were not established until 1999. The lengthy rectorship of J.E.G. Quick (1947–74), in particular, allowed complacency to be acceptable, with the preservation of the school’s reputation taking precedence over the protection of children.
- Governance was, for too long, remote and disconnected from the day-to-day lives of boarders, and governors failed to challenge when they should have done.
- Morrison’s employment practices were poor. Teachers known to have abused children were not disciplined. Unsuitable house staff were allowed to move on with supportive references. Prospective employers were not warned about their failings.
- There was a lack of objectivity and candour in the way that Morrison’s dealt with some internal complaints. Personality and the school’s reputation could trump child protection.
- Although Morrison’s ceased taking boarders in 2007 and is no longer a boarding school, its recent leaders have sought to learn from the school’s past failures in relation to child protection when it was a boarding school and continue to do so.
- Morrison’s has provided many pupils with a good education.
- Some children who were abused also had positive experiences.
- Morrison’s offered a genuine apology for the abuse experienced by children entrusted into their care.

1 Introduction

Children were abused

The impact of childhood abuse at a boarding school can be as profound and long-lasting as abuse that occurred in any other residential setting, and I find that children were abused whilst in the care of Morrison's. Most of the abuse took place within the boarding houses. They were located in different buildings, most often some distance from the main school. Abuse of boarders also took place within the school. The types and scale of abuse that took place in the boarding houses and in the school are considered in separate chapters. Inevitably there is much overlap. Bullying was often physical but was always emotionally harmful. Sexual abuse was both physically and emotionally abusive.

I find that children were abused whilst at Morrison's. Most of the abuse took place within the boarding houses.

Evidence

In these findings, reference is made to some parts of the evidence of individual witnesses where I have found them to be particularly illustrative of the main aspects of what was happening. They are, however, of necessity, a limited selection. The fact that a particular piece of evidence is not referred to or discussed does not mean that it has not been accepted or that it has not helped to build the overall picture.

In making these findings I have applied the standard of proof explained in my decision of 30 January 2018, namely that

when determining what facts have been established in the course of this Inquiry, it is appropriate that I do so by reference to the civil standard of proof, namely balance of probabilities. I will not, however, consider myself constrained from making findings about, for example, what may possibly have happened or about the strength of particular evidence, where I consider it would be helpful to do so.¹¹

For the avoidance of doubt, I have not applied the criminal standard of proof in making these findings. The criminal standard of proof is a higher standard of proof, namely proof beyond reasonable doubt.

The period covered in evidence ranged from about 1950¹² to 1993.¹³ All oral evidence was given under oath or affirmation. Where the evidence relied on is drawn from a written statement, the statement was signed after having been reviewed by the witness and confirmed as being a true account.

In describing what happened at Morrison's Academy, I have quoted from some of the evidence of former pupils that I have accepted as establishing what happened. I do this so as, amongst other things, to ensure that their voices are now heard.

11 [Standard of Proof - Decision by the Rt Hon. Lady Smith](#), Chair of SCAI, 25 January 2018.

12 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016.

13 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011.

2 History and background of the school

Morrison's is an independent school in Crieff, Perthshire. It is now a day school for boys and girls aged 2-18, but it was, until 2007, also a boarding school. Its motto is *ad summa tendendum* (striving for the highest), which the school of today says 'sets the tone for all we do'.¹⁴ It was opened on 1 October 1860, and named after its benefactor Thomas Morrison (1761-1820), who was born in Muthill, three miles south of Crieff.

Trained as a stonemason in Auchterarder, Morrison made his fortune as a master builder in Edinburgh where he was heavily involved in the construction of the New Town. His will directed his trustees to

erect and endow an institution or institutions as to them shall appear best calculated to promote the interests of mankind, having a particular regard to the Education of youth and the diffusion of knowledge ... although I do not wish to confine this object to a particular place, yet I have regard in my views to the part of the country where I was born and to the City of Edinburgh, where I long resided and acquired my good fortunes.¹⁵

After years of searching, the trustees decided upon Crieff where they purchased the Old Market Park in 1857.



Morrison's Academy main building, c.1930s

In its first year, Morrison's provided education for boys only but in the second academic session they also offered places to girls. There was, however, strict segregation and, in 1880, a separate building was bought for the girls' school. It was only in 1979 that the girls' and boys' schools merged to form a fully co-educational boarding and day school,¹⁶ although they had always been considered to be one establishment with a common Board of Governors. The change was driven by anxiety that '[t]he phasing out of the grant-in-aid and the proposed ending of the system of Authority Sponsored Pupils is likely ... to lead to a drop in the number of day pupils', and the Board had hoped that the school roll might be enhanced by increased boarding numbers.¹⁷

During its first 20 years, Morrison's was a day school. Provision for boarding was formally established in 1880, under the responsibility of the school rector, when a purpose-built

14 See 'About Us', Morrison's Academy, <https://morrisonacademy.org/about-us/> (accessed 16 November 2022).

15 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.3.

16 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.13.

17 Morrison's Academy, school magazine: *The Morrisonian*, 1977, p.3.

boarding house - Academy House - was opened, accommodating up to 40 boys. For the next 127 years, it continued as a boarding and day school.

Boarding expanded progressively, necessitating the addition of other boarding houses for boys. The first girl boarders were accepted in 1927 and were initially catered for in houses run by members of staff. It was part of the attraction of Morrison's that boarding was available to both boys and girls, enabling brothers and sisters to attend the same school.

Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association (MABHA)¹⁸ was set up in 1933 by the Clerk to the Board of Governors and a local provost, Provost Mungall, with the intention of securing funds to purchase properties to meet the rising demand for boarding.¹⁹ MABHA was an organisation independent of the school. It did, however, have very close links with it. One of its objects was '[t]o establish, carry on, and maintain either alone or jointly with any County Council or Education Committee, properly-equipped boarding houses in Crieff or at such other place or places in Scotland as may be considered expedient for accommodation of resident pupils or scholars at Morrison's Academy, Crieff'.²⁰ The rector of Morrison's Academy was named as warden of MABHA and - initially at least - staff from the school were appointed as housemasters and housemistresses. A girls' MABHA came into existence in the 1950s but was merged with that of the boys in 1963.

Initially MABHA ran two boarding houses, catering for approximately 70 boys. Two further houses were added in 1946 and 1950 respectively. By the 1950s, the number had grown to about 115 boys per annum. Despite boarding accommodation being provided by the school and, later, by MABHA, demand for boarding places commonly outstripped available accommodation. As a result, members of the Crieff community set up their own private boarding houses. They did so with the knowledge and tacit consent of the school. Such private boarding houses included fairly large houses known as Newstead, Whinmount, and South Park, as well as several small establishments that catered for a few pupils each. Morrison's was one of the few schools in the boarding schools case study where children boarded in accommodation that was not provided and run by the school. Newstead, in its early years in the 1940s and 1950s, was known as the Children's Hotel and provided accommodation for infants (children under five years old) as well as primary pupils. Although no record exists of their legal status, it is understood that arrangements were made directly between parents of pupils and the owners of the private houses.

The boarding houses under MABHA were run by appointed staff and were accountable to its warden, who was the rector of the school. There is some indication in the available records that the private (that is, non-MABHA) boarding houses aligned to the spirit, ethos, and values of those managed by MABHA.²¹ However, it is plain that oversight of all the boarding accommodation was inadequate.

18 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.42. A company incorporated under the Companies Act 1929, registered number 17378.

19 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.8.

20 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.9.

21 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.42.

Gradually, the number of houses run by MABHA increased, and in 1966 there were seven MABHA houses accommodating 201 pupils. In 1977, the decision was taken to disband MABHA, and the running of their boarding houses was taken over by Morrison's.²²

Historically, Morrison's had always catered for a number of children of Scottish parents working or serving in the armed forces abroad. 'Colin', a pupil in the 1950s and 1960s, remembered pupils from 'India, Hong Kong, other parts of the world ... But equally there were children there much the same as myself where you are coming from other parts of Scotland.'²³ That reflects comments made at the centenary celebrations in 1960, as quoted in John Williamson's *A History of Morrison's Academy, Crieff 1860-1980*:

We are not a day school also attended by a relatively unimportant group of pupils who happen to live in hostels in the town; nor are we a boarding school which a number of local pupils are suffered to attend; nor yet a school with a boarding elite, living in the school, regarding it as its own and considering itself the guardian of its standards against a local mob. The Boys School, for instance, is entered in the morning, on equal terms from outside, by about 230 day boys and 180 boarders; no class, no set, no School House, no society, no school game or activity can exist without reflecting these proportions ... if the boarders bring to what would otherwise be a smallish rural day school the varied experiences and wider views of all parts of the world, the day pupils bring to many who are otherwise homeless in

their native land the sense of belonging to a locality and a community. The same ... holds true of the Girls' School ... The Academy give special priority to the children of Scottish parents abroad from Northumberland to the Falkland Isles.²⁴

By the 1980s and 1990s, the boarding of children at Morrison's whose parents were with the armed forces was waning because '(a) school fees began to outstrip the allowances the Forces personnel could claim; (b) better schools abroad meant that expat families had less need to send their children back to the UK for schooling; and (c) boarding simply became less fashionable'.²⁵ Despite initially successful efforts by the school to seek new markets, boarding numbers began to decline. Gareth Edwards remembered his appointment as rector in 1996:

At the time the school's roll was falling, especially in respect of boarding students. The school was increasingly reliant upon overseas students, overwhelmingly from the Far East ... I was aware of the pressures on all boarding schools in the 1980s and 1990s ... I also knew that Morrison's Academy had, like others, recruited significant numbers of students from the Far East. In this regard Morrison's had been particularly successful. So much so that the balance of Far East students greatly outweighed those from the UK and other countries in Europe and other parts of Asia, making it less attractive to potential UK parents in particular ... Boarding numbers had been dropping during the previous decade, and when I arrived one boarding house had already

22 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, pp.8-9.

23 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.10-11.

24 John Williamson, *A History of Morrison's Academy, Crieff 1860-1980*. Crieff: Governors of Morrison's Academy (1980).

25 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.23.

been mothballed and was sold quite soon after. During my tenure we rationalised again and moved the boarding students from two single sex houses into the remaining two single sex houses, Dalmhor and Academy House ... One major factor in the reduction of boarding students during my time was the financial crash in the Far East of 1998. This saw the Malaysian companies which sponsored several students remove those students with immediate effect.²⁶

Morrison's continued as a day and boarding school until 27 June 2007, but the numbers

of boarders had continued to fall inexorably prior to that. Simon Pengelley, appointed as head in 2004, described it by that stage as 'culturally a day school with boarders'.²⁷

Headmasters and headmistresses

The rector of Morrison's had and has overall responsibility for all aspects of the school, including the residential care of pupils and advising the governing body on policy matters.²⁸ Available information suggests Morrison's has had 13 rectors since 1860 including the most recent appointment.²⁹ They are listed in Table 3.



Aerial view of Morrison's Academy

26 [Transcript, day 227](#): Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.135-6.

27 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.18.

28 [Transcript, day 227](#): Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.134.

29 John Williamson, *A History of Morrison's Academy, Crieff 1860-1980*; Morrison's Academy, List of headmasters, deputies and matrons, 2020, at MOR-000000048.

Table 3: Morrison’s Academy rectors, 1860–present

Name	Period of employment
Rev. William Ogilvie A.M.	1860–77
Mr Thomas Tyacke	1878–80
Mr George Strathairn	1880–1909
Mr Alexander Wright	1909–23
Mr James Donaldson	1923–47
Mr J.E.G. Quick	1947–75
Mr David R. Johnston-Jones	1975–8
Mr Harry A. Ashmall	1979–96
Mr Gareth Edwards	1996–2001
Mr Ian Bendall	2001–3
Mr Simon Pengeley	2004–15
Mr Gareth Warren	2015–21
Mr Andrew McGarva	2021–present

The boys’ and girls’ schools were separate until 1979. Available information suggests that, after a period of lady superintendents being in charge, six successive headmistresses (Table 4) were appointed to the girls’ school up until 1979.

Table 4: Morrison’s Academy girls’ school headmistresses, 1899–1978

Name	Period of employment
Miss H. MacFie	1899–1905
Miss B.S. Mason	1905–45
Miss M. Ewing	1945–56
Miss M.M.P. Muirie	1957–64
Miss M. Baillie	1965–71
Miss A.D. Mackinnon	1972–8

As the school grew, the heads were supported in the management of the school by a senior management team.

Boarding houses

The numbers of school, MABHA, and private boarding houses used by pupils at Morrison’s Academy ebbed and flowed between 1860 and 2007. Individual MABHA and school-run houses were also used for both boys and girls in different periods to meet demand. Occasionally houses were mixed for brief periods. The majority of boarding accommodation was in large houses located around Crieff which had previously been private homes, each varying in size and layout.

Some houses were close to the main school, but others were a significant distance away. ‘Polly’, for example, described a 15-minute walk to and from Benheath to the school and a 25-minute walk to the school refectory – also separate from the main school – in 1978.³⁰

Numbers of boarders varied widely. Private boarding houses might have had only a handful of pupils, while the biggest MABHA houses – such as Dalmhor and Glenearn – could cater for 50 pupils or more.

Records relating to the make-up of the boarding houses are limited. Table 5 gives details of most, if not all, of the houses involved. The dates are approximate.³¹

30 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of ‘Polly’ (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.45.

31 Morrison’s Academy, List of headmasters, deputies and matrons, 2020, at MOR-000000048; John Williamson, *A History of Morrison’s Academy, Crieff 1860–1980*.

Table 5: Morrison’s Academy boarding houses, 1860-2007

Name	Years	Status
Academy, within the school	1860-1947	School then MABHA Boys
Academy, moved outwith the school	1947-75 (when it became Knox House)	MABHA Boys
New Academy	1975-2006	MABHA then school Boys
Glenearn	1892-2000s	Private, then MABHA from 1950 Boys. Girls from 2000s
The Heugh	Post First World War-1936	Private
Aviemore	1920s	Private Girls
Knockearn (became Dalmhor Junior 1969)	1926-94	Boys and girls. Mixed in 1978 ³²
Innesmohr (later Oakwood)	1927	Private Girls
Balbegno	1930s	Private Girls
Benheath	1930s-1992	Private, then MABHA from 1958 Girls
Ogilvie	1935-92	MABHA Boys then girls
Avondale	1940s-60s	Private Boys
Whinmount	1940s-c.1963	Private Boys
South Park	1940s-c.1964	Private Boys
Newstead	1940s-1974	Private, initially the ‘Children’s Hotel’ for infants, then girls
Croftweit	1945-98	Originally infants and juniors Girls from 1978
Dalmhor	1946-2007	MABHA, then school Boys. Girls by 1999 and mixed for final year in 2007
Arduthie	1950s	Private Girls
Knox (formerly Academy House)	1975-89	Girls

32 Written statement of ‘Polly’ (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, pp.2-3, paragraph 8.

From the 1920s, separately from the boarding houses, the pupils were divided into four 'houses' for sporting and competitive purposes. All were named after clans - Campbells, Drummonds, Grahams, and Murrays. They were unconnected with the boarding houses.

Pupil numbers

Morrison's was not able to provide full details of pupil numbers at the school between 1931 and 2007 (when boarding ceased): 'The data is patchy as no single document recording boarder numbers has been located. If necessary, a more comprehensive record could be compiled, possibly through "head counts" in Boarding House annual photographs, of which there seems to be a fairly complete set from the 1960s onwards.'³³ This task has been undertaken by SCAI, and the findings used to supplement the school response, along with analysis of inspection reports and such archival records as exist.

School rolls

Morrison's pupil rolls provide the numbers of pupils admitted or readmitted to the school from 1930 to 2001 (Table 6). The rolls for boys and girls were separate until May 1979. The figures provide an overall indication of how many students entered Morrison's Academy each year. They suggest that between 1 September 1930 and 31 August 1979, 3,470 boys were admitted to Morrison's Academy. Between 1 September 1943 and 31 August 1979, 3,247 girls were admitted. The highest admission year in that period was 1974, when 222 students were admitted. The lowest admission year for the same period was 1945, when 114 students were admitted.

Between 1 September 1979 and 31 August 2001, 3,013 students were admitted to Morrison's. The highest admission year in this period was 1986-7, with 173 students. The lowest admission was 1998-9, when 78 students were enrolled.³⁴

Table 6: Morrison's Academy pupil numbers

Period	Boys	Girls	Total
1930-43	716	NA	716
1943-79	2,754	3,247	6,001
1979-2001			3,013

Boarders

The school provided a breakdown of pupil numbers (Table 7):³⁵

Table 7: Morrison's Academy numbers of boarders and day pupils

Period	Number of boarders	Number of day pupils	Total pupils
1970-80	250 to 300	410 to 600	660 to 900
1980-90	320 to 165	590	910 to 755
1990-2000	160 to 30	590 to 410	750 to 440
2000-7	40 to 10	450	490 to 460

33 Morrison's Academy, *Parts A and B response to section 21 notice*, at MOR.001.001.0003, p.22.

34 SCAI, *Analysis of pupil rolls and photo headcounts, 2022*, at INQ-000000750.

35 Morrison's Academy, *Parts A and B response to section 21 notice*, at MOR.001.001.0003, p.22.

Other records recovered by SCAI indicate pupil roll numbers for earlier and later years. For example, in 1959, there were 428 male pupils and 455 female pupils, a total of 883.³⁶ Of these, 165 males and 90 females were boarders.³⁷

In January 1968, the total school roll was 882.³⁸ One hundred and sixty-three males and 97 females boarded.³⁹ The next academic year, 1968-9, the school roll was 883. Twenty-nine per cent of the total pupils, or about 256, boarded, and 39 per cent of the secondary-school pupils (586) were sponsored by the Perth and Kinross education authority.⁴⁰

There is a gap in retrieved data until 1999, when a report by HM Inspectors of Schools recorded 58 residential pupils, 23 of whom were girls, despite an optimum roll for residential pupils set at 90, in two houses – Academy House for boys and Dalmhor for girls.⁴¹

In 2005, the total pupil roll was 491, of whom 47 were boarders – 29 boys and 18 girls. Thirty-four boarders came from overseas.⁴² Between 1999 and 2005, the optimum roll for residential pupils had decreased from 90 to 68. Most pupils shared a bedroom with one or two others, with the exception of a few senior students who had their own rooms.

In September 2006, the total school roll was 494,⁴³ but the Care Commission inspection

report of November 2006 recorded that boarding numbers had dropped to 15 – 12 boys and three girls. Seven came from overseas. By November 2006, Academy House had closed and the boys had moved to Dalmhor, which consequently accommodated both boys and girls for the last year of operation.⁴⁴ By June 2007, boarding numbers had dropped again: ‘only eight pupils remained as senior pupils had left the school on completion of exams’.⁴⁵ Boarding at Morrison’s ceased at the end of the academic year.

Staffing

Only limited staff records exist. Full records are not available with which to confirm precisely the number and qualifications of staff employed by Morrison’s in the period 1930-2007 or how they were managed.

Staff numbers ‘would range from an estimated 35-150 employees including boarding staff, support staff and teaching staff’.⁴⁶ It seems that the ratio of childcare workers to children ‘would vary from 1:4 to 1:10’⁴⁷ and, in general, ‘covering the period of time under investigation, the boarding houses would have a resident housemistress or housemaster with relief staff to cover extra duties. Matrons or medical professionals would be available. Some houses had their own matron.’⁴⁸

36 NRS, ED48/1505 SED, Grant-Aided Schools in Scotland, Appendix C, at SGV-000007360, p.19.

37 NRS, ED48/1505 SED, Grant-Aided Schools in Scotland, Appendix C, at SGV-000007360, p.19.

38 NRS, ED48/2017, Members’ Note 19: Morrison’s Academy, at SGV-000007365, p.38.

39 ‘Three way choice for direct grant schools’, *Scottish Educational Journal*, 27 March 1970, at SGV-000007369, p.179.

40 NRS, ED48/2017, Members’ Note 30: Note of visit to Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 3 December 1968, at SGV-000007365, p.65.

41 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030.

42 HMIe and Care Commission Inspection Report, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.1.

43 Scottish Executive Education Department, Through-school: School census 2006-07, at SGV-000067114 and SGV-000067116.

44 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison’s Academy, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253.

45 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison’s Academy, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254.

46 Morrison’s Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.30.

47 Morrison’s Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.31.

48 Morrison’s Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.14.

Only female staff were employed in the girls' houses. The boys' houses were mainly staffed by married housemasters who were usually also members of the teaching staff.⁴⁹ By the 1940s, there is clear evidence of Morrison's and/or MABHA recruiting for positions such as housemaster or housemistress, and matron by way of advertisement in newspapers such as *The Glasgow Herald*, *The Scotsman*, and *The Courier*. Morrison's accepted that, at times, it was difficult to find suitable staff.⁵⁰

Legal status

In accordance with the wishes of the late Thomas Morrison, a Board of Trustees was established which became known as the Board of Governors of Morrison's Academy. Available records suggest that changes to the terms of the Trust scheme were made in 1888, 1913, 1921, 1936, 1963, and 1978 pertaining to:

- the composition of the governing body
- administrative arrangements
- the financial affairs of the trust
- the operation and maintenance of the school including the setting of fees, staffing and educational provision.⁵¹

Governance and administration

The composition of the governing body was, and remains, largely as stipulated in the original trust deed, namely:

- representatives from the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow and St. Andrews
- representatives from Perth Council (now Perth and Kinross Council), of which four

are to be from the Council education committee and the remainder to be of close vicinity to the School

- a representative from the Morrisonian Club
- a chairman
- a clerk to the board who, for many decades, was an employee of the school's solicitors.⁵²

Since 1980, the board has usually also included a parent of a current pupil. Since the 1990s, in common with some other independent schools, the need for a more skills-based approach to board appointments has been recognised and a skills-based matrix applied. The rector attends board meetings and reports to the board 'on the development, challenges and current issues of the school'.⁵³

The board remains responsible for implementing the trust. Decisions on the financial, operational, educational, and future direction of Morrison's all lie with the board. Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001) explained:

I was responsible to the governing body. I reported to them at regular twice-termly meetings. The equivalent of my line manager was the chairman of the governing body, with whom I had regular contact on at least a monthly basis, if not weekly. He undertook an annual appraisal of my performance.⁵⁴

Until 1977, MABHA worked in tandem with the governors in relation to securing accommodation for boarders, but thereafter it took over responsibility for the operation

49 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.31.

50 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.31.

51 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.6.

52 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.32.

53 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.32.

54 [Transcript, day 227](#): Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.133.

of all the boarding houses. From 1980, Morrison's had a statutory responsibility to provide adequate accommodation for its boarders and since 2000, it has had a statutory responsibility to adequately safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. The law has also provided throughout that the school owed a duty to its pupils to take reasonable care for their health, safety, and welfare.⁵⁵

The board now operates through a structure of subcommittees and has done so since at least 2004. Simon Pengelley took up office as rector in 2004 and spoke of Morrison's system of governance in generally positive terms:

I had some experience of governors' meetings at my previous school and I was not impressed ... There was one board meeting a term, I think, of the full board. I don't remember there being any subcommittees. There were people on the board who had been there since the old king died. If they received any training or not, who knows? ... When I came to Morrison's, okay, the bar was pretty low, but now I am able, with a bit of perspective, to see that actually the governance at Morrison's was ... really very good. There was lots of scrutiny by different subcommittees of what was going on within the school. I don't know how long that had been in place but it was there when I arrived ... for board meetings I would report on any issues that I thought needed to be brought to their attention, including pastoral and welfare issues, but there wasn't - as far as I recollect ... a pastoral and welfare committee

at that time ... And no doubt the way these incremental changes come in, that would have happened, I am sure, if I had stayed at the school ... I don't remember governor training at that stage - at any point.⁵⁶

From about 2004, governors became actively engaged with the boarding houses. Simon Pengelley said: 'Two governors also visited the houses each term to listen to the views of pupils and staff. The chairperson of the board of governors offered useful support for the discussion of issues related to the care and welfare of pupils.'⁵⁷

Finance

Morrison's was and is principally funded by the fees it charges.

Until 1977, boarding fees were charged separately from education fees. The boarding fees were payable directly to the provider of residential care, whether it was Morrison's, MABHA, or the owners of a private house who provided boarding facilities. From 1977, when Morrison's assumed full responsibility for the operation of all the boarding houses, the fees it charged included a boarding element.⁵⁸

There is evidence, albeit limited, that suggests Morrison's offered bursaries to eligible students, and it certainly participated in the Assisted Places Scheme, which ran from 1980 until it closed to new members in 1997.⁵⁹

There is also some evidence of financial support being provided by the local authority. 'Robert' said:

55 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), MOR.001.001.0003, pp.9-10.

56 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.45-7.

57 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.45.

58 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.5.

59 Morrison's Academy, Minutes of meeting of 26 March 1981, at MOR-000000008.

Even though Morrison's is a private school now, when I went to it, it was a state-aided boarding school. A state-aided boarding school in those days was one which took kids but had no facilities to go on to should they pass their 11 Plus. If you were in Perth and passed your 11 Plus exam you went to Perth Academy. If you failed, you went to Perth High School. In Crieff, if you passed your 11 Plus you had nowhere to go. They paid Morrison's to take these kids. If the headmaster thought they didn't fit in, come year 4, he culled them ...

The state-aided element of this dried up under Labour so the school wanted more boarders.⁶⁰

Records for the academic year 1968-9 show that, as 'Robert' understood was the position, financial support was provided by the local authority. Thirty-nine per cent of Morrison's senior pupils were, in that year, funded by the Perth and Kinross education authority.⁶¹



Morrison's Academy main building

Education, training, and qualifications

Morrison's teaching staff appear mostly to have been graduates of British universities but may or may not have had a teaching qualification. It was not until 2017 that it became a requirement for teachers in the independent sector to possess a relevant teaching qualification.

However, following the coming into force of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, and the creation of the Scottish Social Services Council, training and qualification requirements were introduced for ancillary staff working in all residential care. By then, it was too late to have any real impact on boarding at Morrison's.⁶²

Guardians

Morrison's had a long tradition of taking boarders from overseas, particularly from the Far East. These boarders required to have a guardian within the UK to take responsibility for the child and, for example, to attend parents' evenings, make travel arrangements for the child, collect the child at the end of term, and accommodate the child during the shorter breaks such as at half-term. The child's parents sometimes nominated the guardian, but Morrison's also actively assisted with finding guardians and with their appointment. Initially, the school looked to local families who themselves had children at the school, known as 'friends of the school'.⁶³ However, over time, it became increasingly difficult to find guardians via this route. Morrison's turned to recruiting guardians

60 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.3-4.

61 NRS, ED48/2017, Members' Note 30: Note of visit to Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 3 December 1968, at SGV-000007365, p.65. See also NRS, ED48/1505, Public Schools Commission, at SGV-000007360.

62 Scottish Social Services Council Submission to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, 25 November 2020, at SSC-000000004.

63 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.14.

who had no previous connection with the school, including the use of external agencies such as 'Universal Aunts'.⁶⁴

All such methods for the appointment of guardians had the potential to expose pupils of Morrison's to risk of harm, including

abuse. As Morrison's accepted: 'Criminal record checks were made (but this may not always have applied previously) and interviews and home inspections were undertaken before boarders were placed with new guardians. However, this was still a fairly informal and unregulated procedure.'⁶⁵

64 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.14.

65 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.15.

3

The Morrison's Academy regime

Introduction

Children, including boarders, were abused at Morrison's. The school failed to adequately supervise and manage the boarding houses and that enabled physical, sexual, and emotional abuse to take place.

The school failed to adequately supervise and manage the boarding houses.

Physical abuse often took the form of excessive punishment. In the school setting, it was perpetrated by teachers. In the boarding houses, excessive and physically abusive punishment was administered by teachers as well as by senior boys (to younger children). Also, some senior boys in the boarding houses engaged in sexually abusive behaviour towards younger ones. Further, children were subjected to and witnessed emotional abuse.

Morrison's: a school of two parts

For boarders, Morrison's Academy was very much a school of two parts. Unlike most of the schools in the boarding school case study, which were situated on distinct campuses where pupils lived and were educated, Morrison's had separate schools for boys and girls and also a network of boarding houses, usually in large Victorian

villas, scattered throughout the town of Crieff. There was a real sense of physical distance and separation of environments between the main school and each of the boarding houses.

This disparate arrangement had a profound effect on some applicants who had the misfortune to be in one of a number of houses where abuse was endemic. In the case of one boarding house, it lasted for decades. Not only could there be a lack of proper oversight within the individual boarding houses, but also a complete absence of oversight of all the houses by Morrison's itself.

Education

A number of applicants were positive about the education they received. For example, Iain Leighton said: 'Education was important at school. You had to study hard, work hard, which I did ... I have no hesitation in saying the teaching was to a very high standard.'⁶⁶

'Polly' thought the education she received was 'very good ... Some [teachers] were excellent and I still retain - I am still fond of some of them to this day because I know how much they have done for me in terms of education.'⁶⁷ It has to be recognised that, for many, school also served as a place of retreat and respite from the boarding houses, where most of the abuse took place.

66 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-00000018, pp.100-1.

67 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-00000016, p.54.

'I never felt either safe or comfortable in the boarding house. I never felt threatened in the school.'

As 'Colin' explained, the school was a relief inasmuch as you didn't have the same sort of closed or enclosing atmosphere ... The school was much bigger ... It was a place where you would also meet other pupils ... whereas in your boarding house you might have only had maybe three or four pupils from your same class in the boarding house, so you were mixing with a larger cohort of pupils.⁶⁸

Many children, such as 'Geoff', simply did not feel safe in their boarding houses:

[School] was fairly strict, in the sense that good behaviour was expected at all times, but the culture in the school itself I remember being quite different from the culture in the boarding house ... in the sense ... that I felt, particularly in my younger years, very threatened in the boarding house. I never felt safe, I would say it that way, either safe or comfortable in the boarding house. I never felt threatened in the school.⁶⁹

Iain Leighton remembered '[b]eing at the school I loved' but that he would 'trudge back to' the boarding house.⁷⁰

'Polly' said:

I loved going to the school. The school was tough, I mean the teachers were like any teacher, they were tough. But going to the school was like a release, because it was mixed, it was boarding, it was day pupils and it was co-ed, so it

was mixed. And as the years went on, I found mechanisms not to go back to the boarding house. I'd go to the library, go and do sport, anything that meant after school I didn't go back to the house. I could avoid being in the house, be there as little as possible.⁷¹

School was the place where pupils could disappear, detach, and distract themselves from what was going on in their boarding life. The reluctance to return to the boarding houses was not noticed by school staff. 'Polly' noted:

So library, different teacher; sports, different teacher. It was very mixed, so they probably didn't join me up and think she is never going back, and nobody at the house ever bothered to think twice. Just as long as I was at tea, that was all they were interested in.⁷²

Management of the boarding houses

Morrison's section 21 Part A response includes:

The Rector was named as Warden of the Association [Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association (MABHA)] and staff from the School were appointed as House Master and House Mistress. It would appear that the day-to-day management and running of the boarding houses were under the guidance of the Rector and staff in order to align with the provision of boarders housed by the School.⁷³

68 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.12.

69 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.63.

70 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.101.

71 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.62.

72 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.63.

73 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.8.

This appears to have been intended also to apply to the privately owned boarding houses:

There also existed two fairly large private boarding houses for boys and several small establishments who catered for a few boarders each. Although no records exist of legal status, it is understood that a private arrangement was made between the parents of pupils and the owners of the private boarding houses. Records do not exist of the governance of these houses but there is no indication that these boarders did not follow the rules and regulations of the boarding Houses under the School's authority ... It appears from the records that the Private Boarding Houses aligned to the spirit, ethos and values of those under the MABHA.⁷⁴

Rules and regulations

Other than the boarders' handbooks of the 1990s, 'which documented the school's code of conduct with regard to boarders and unified the rules across all houses',⁷⁵ there are no earlier rules or regulations available for school-run houses. Regulations for the administration of MABHA boarding houses are set out in the minutes of MABHA dated 8 February 1932.⁷⁶ They were reviewed and elaborated upon in June 1941.⁷⁷ It seems likely that there were broadly similar rules and regulations across all the boarding houses, irrespective of who owned them, though how they were implemented is not obvious. The duties of housemasters are striking for their brevity:

(a) Adequate supervision of the boys' lessons and homework at all times.

(b) Along with the Matron the general administration of the House and the supervision of the boys according to the House Rules as from time to time defined by the Warden with the approval of the Committee.⁷⁸

The absence of any mention of the wellbeing of the children is also striking. Whilst it might be thought charitably that it was self-evident to MABHA that housemasters were responsible for the children's wellbeing, evidence of applicants indicates that it seems not to have been recognised in practice, as a duty owed to children in their houses.

'Anna', for example, described Croftweir in the 1980s and early 1990s:

The housemistress was meant to be the motherly figure who made a home in the boarding house, and that was what the school would have told you. If you spoke to her she would deny that. [She] told us that her superior had expected her to make it like a second home and she had no intention of that. In her opinion there was no way she could do that as she was not our mother and couldn't pretend to be. The boarding house was an institution and she was running it like an institution.⁷⁹

'Anna' spent seven years in the house, and nothing changed. She recalled that the housemistress's 'husband had ... died and I think that's why she got the job ... I think the school gave her a job to try and keep her in a job and it gave her somewhere to live.'⁸⁰ From 'Anna's' account, it would appear that the school may have been more concerned

74 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, pp.8, 42.

75 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.13.

76 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.34.

77 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, pp.34, 36.

78 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.35.

79 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.5, paragraph 21.

80 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.3, paragraph 12.

with the wellbeing of the housemistress than that of the pupils, and certainly did not adequately oversee the in-house regime.

That lack of oversight is also reflected in the approach to House Rules which provided for only limited supervision, as in, for example, the 1941 version:

1. The Housemaster and Matron will breakfast and lunch with the boys.
2. Visits by the boys to a Picture House should be infrequent and boys should always be accompanied by a Housemaster or Matron.
3. Boys must not be allowed down town except on Saturday forenoons, and only for a reasonable period, say 1 hour.
4. The Housemaster or Matron must always accompany the boys to Church.⁸¹

I heard evidence about such rules that I accept. For example, 'Colin' explained that his days were spent in the school, but that he returned to the boarding house for lunch each day, and that the only time walking was supervised was when he and his fellow boarders went to church.⁸²

There were some instances where the same rules certainly did not apply across all boarding facilities. From 1947, MABHA properties only accepted children from the age of nine, whereas private houses – such as Newstead – accepted boarders from as young as three.⁸³

The extent to which rules were actually followed would appear to have depended

very much on the attitude and culture of a particular house. As Morrison's itself recognised: 'many of the House Rules ... were still in operation in the 1960s and 1970s although the extent to which these were implemented varied from one boarding house to another'.⁸⁴

Whatever the reality was, the rules themselves lacked any apparent consideration of child welfare or protection. Morrison's seems to have assumed either that children were not at risk of abuse or that if it occurred, staff would become aware and respond appropriately, without training or guidance. They were not alone in this – other schools considered in this case study also appear to have operated on that basis for most of the twentieth century.

Matters that will not have helped were the lack of staff and lack of funds. One file of documents survives for Academy House from the school year 1979–80.⁸⁵ Repeated reference is made to the need for additional help for the housemaster and his wife – who acted as matron – and tensions are plain in relation both to their remuneration and to the appointment of an assistant matron.

Interestingly, the same file also contains reference to bullying in Dalmhor in May 1980 and suggests that steps were taken once it was discovered. A memo from the rector to the housemaster mentions warnings having been given to three boys, and an allegation of bullying was to be investigated 'so that I may take appropriate action'.⁸⁶

81 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.35.

82 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.9.

83 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.26.

84 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.36.

85 Morrison's Academy, Academy House Correspondence, 1979–80, at MOR-000000040.

86 Morrison's Academy, Academy House Correspondence, 1979–80, at MOR-000000040, p.4.

The role of the warden

Oversight of the boarding houses should have been provided by the rector of Morrison's, who *ex officio* was the warden of MABHA. He was line manager for the housemasters, housemistresses, and matrons.

The 1932 regulations provided that '[t]he Warden will have the general supervision of, and right to review, questions of discipline in the house'.⁸⁷

The 1941 regulations were even clearer:

1. The Warden shall be responsible ... for the proper conduct of the House ... in pursuance of which he shall visit the House frequently, and shall have access to them at any time.
2. The Warden shall report regularly to the Council or Committee of the Association regarding anything affecting the welfare of the House or the boys, and shall advise the Council or Committee regarding the appointment of Housemaster or Matron.⁸⁸

There is little evidence of rectors exercising their power of general supervision or reviewing questions of discipline in the boarding houses. At its highest '[t]he rector occasionally visited and the assistant rectors regularly visited'.⁸⁹ Even when visits did occur, they did not adequately focus on the welfare of the children.

Some minutes of governors' meetings record instances of indiscipline amongst boarders, for example 'cannabis and sexual behaviour',⁹⁰ but specifics are lacking. The rector expressed concern on that occasion that the behaviour might be explained by a 'lack of occupation for boarders during weekends',⁹¹ but it appears that addressing such problems (when they were actually shared with the board) was not approached systematically but on a case-by-case basis. MABHA minutes suggest that 'there were fairly regular inspections of the boarding houses, undertaken by sub-committees',⁹² but these focused on the fabric and facilities of the boarding houses and would record the award of contracts for refurbishment, minor repairs, procurement of furniture or even potato peeling machines, not the wellbeing of the boarders.⁹³

Governors would occasionally visit the boarding houses informally when invited to social events, but these events were infrequent up until the 1990s.⁹⁴ They did not amount to inspections. MABHA minutes from November 1968 show that a visit was made by the Public Schools Commission to the new complex at Dalmhör and the girls' boarding house, Benheath.⁹⁵ The Commission's terms of reference focused on ways in which there might be integration of independent and state education and although it reported

87 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.33.

88 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.34.

89 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.37.

90 Morrison's Academy, Extract of minutes of meeting of the Governors of Morrison's Academy, 27 March 1975, at MOR-000000057, p.1.

91 Morrison's Academy, Minutes of Board of Governors' meetings, 1974-8, at MOR-000000007, p.44.

92 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.36.

93 Morrison's Academy, Minutes of Boarding Houses Association meeting, 1964, at MOR-000000014, p.19.

94 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.36.

95 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.36; The [Newsom Report, 1968](#), for the Public Schools Commission. Newsom reported on the principles which, in the Commission's view, should govern the integration of independent boarding schools with the state system of education.

'There were absolutely no inspections of the boarding house.'

separately on boarding provision, its conclusions went no further than endorsing a decision of the Secretary of State for Education that all independent boarding schools should be required to reach 'an efficient standard'.⁹⁶

Their focus was not on the care and wellbeing of boarders.

The experience of 'Angus' further supports this:

I don't remember parents wandering around the boarding house. There were absolutely no inspections of the boarding house. In retrospect, I do wonder why the rector, deputy head or governors didn't take an interest. I would have thought that the rector had overall responsibility and would have seen it as part of that responsibility to know how the boarders were doing. One way of doing that would have been to get down and dirty and appear in the boarding house from time to time. As far as I was aware, there was no external scrutiny.⁹⁷

'Angus' was right - the rector, assistant rector, and governors ought to have taken not just an interest, but a keen interest in what was happening to, and amongst, pupils in the boarding houses. Their failure to do so was a serious omission.

Culture of the boarding houses

Housemasters and housemistresses

Children at Morrison's tended to spend most of their school years in the same boarding house, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s.⁹⁸

It is clear, from the 1932 and 1941 regulations, that the housemaster or housemistress was the key person in their boarding house. They set the tone of the boarding house, line-managed the staff, and reported to the rector. Some were kind and supportive and were actively present in the house. Others were not - they stepped back and willingly delegated responsibility to older children.

Initially, housemasters and housemistresses were recruited from the staff at Morrison's Academy and undertook this role alongside their teaching duties. As boarding provision grew, the school recruited externally and many of them came from a former military background. As a result, many boys' boarding houses came to be run along military lines. Also, recruitment of housemasters, housemistresses, and assistant staff was often not easy,⁹⁹ which in turn resulted in some unsuitable staff being appointed to key roles.

Housemasters and housemistresses often lived in the boarding house with their spouse and children, if any, or in accommodation immediately adjacent.¹⁰⁰ There was no formal pastoral role for spouses, but some were informally involved in caring for children in the boarding houses.¹⁰¹

96 The *Newsom Report, 1968*, for the Public Schools Commission.

97 *Written statement of 'Angus'* (former pupil, 1967-c.1975), at WIT-1-000000694, p.8, paragraph 38.

98 Morrison's Academy, *Parts A and B response to section 21 notice*, at MOR.001.001.0003, p.26.

99 Morrison's Academy, *Parts A and B response to section 21 notice*, at MOR.001.001.0003, p.31.

100 *Transcript, day 226: 'Colin'* (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.16.

101 *Transcript, day 226: 'Colin'* (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.17.

'The matron was aware of the hitting by the prefects and the use of the slipper by the housemaster.'

Matrons

Matrons were recruited locally and generally lived in accommodation adjacent to the boarding house. They were not required to engage in training, nor were they required to have any qualifications. Their characteristics varied and sometimes they were appointed out of necessity rather than choice. Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21) drew upon school records:

I think there is documentation to say that it was challenging and problematic to try to fill particular roles, say as an assistant matron, which I think, just by their sheer nature of looking after residents, their health, the day-to-day running of the houses made it problematic, I believe, and that was an area where they would recruit locally.¹⁰²

'Geoff' remembered three matrons from his time as a boarder at Dalmhor in the 1960s. One was 'warm', one was 'cold but organised', and the third was young 'and appeared to us to be very friendly with the older boys, and that made us feel very uncomfortable'.¹⁰³

Iain Leighton had more positive memories of Dalmhor. Recalling Mrs McVie, his first matron, as being particularly kind to him, he described the three others as being 'all nice and very friendly and very helpful. Matron was always someone you could go to for a cuddle'.¹⁰⁴

'Cillian' in Glenearn found most matrons he encountered to be 'harsh, cold and uncaring. The ones who were kinder would leave quickly because they were horrified by what they saw'.¹⁰⁵

Whatever the character, a consistent theme was that matrons would not usually be seen as people in whom to confide. Even telling a sympathetic matron would be pointless, as Iain Leighton said of his favourite, Mrs McVie:

The matron was aware of the hitting by the prefects and the use of the slipper by the housemaster. If you were really sore, you would go to the matron to see if she could treat it with a balm. She would ask if the injury had come about as a result of the slipper. I remember speaking to her one day and telling her about my concerns. I was upset about something and I realised she had nodded off. She was completely asleep.¹⁰⁶

More fundamentally, they did not want to get involved:

Matrons over the years would all have been very well aware of the physical abuse. From their point of view, they had their board and lodging paid. If they were going to rock the boat then that was them out. They wouldn't take action because they would be thinking about their own position.¹⁰⁷

102 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.115.

103 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963–8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.72.

104 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.91.

105 [Transcript, day 227](#): 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.31.

106 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.120.

107 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.121.

Fiefdoms

Morrison's allowed the boarding houses to become the personal fiefdoms of housemasters and housemistresses, and each of those individuals inevitably influenced the character, style, and atmosphere of their house. Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15) accepted that 'it is something that can happen in boarding schools if there isn't adequate oversight ... I could quite see why it would arise that the ethos of the school and the ethos of the boarding house could become rather separate.'¹⁰⁸ That is precisely what happened at Morrison's, certainly up to the mid-1990s.

Sometimes, it would be to the advantage of a house. If the house was run by a sympathetic housemaster and matron, this could, in fact, positively benefit the house and the children boarding there. Telling observations were made in a draft letter from a housemaster and his wife (who was acting as a matron) to the parents and guardians of boarders after their first term in Academy House, in either 1979 or 1980:

We have to be honest and say that we did not like all the things we saw and have made a number of changes which we feel will be in the long-term interests of the boys. We ... are sure that parents will agree that the boarding house rules and regulations must be adhered to if a house of 58 boys is to be adequately supervised.¹⁰⁹

It is to his credit that that housemaster introduced change as best he could and that he recognised the importance of adequate supervision. Despite the difficulties in recruitment, his was plainly a good appointment.

'Bill' experienced both the good and the bad in his boarding house:

From the age [of] 7 until 14, I was at Whinmount in Drummond Terrace ... There were about 25 boys of all ages ... Whinmount, however, was very strict and would be viewed as brutal if present-day mores and expectations were to be applied. Caning was a routine punishment administered by the housemaster only, but probably too often and too randomly. This was a different era with different standards. The housemaster was a retired ex-colonial policeman, not the best choice for childcare, you might think. The food was simply dreadful. Because it was a privately run establishment the school had no influence on the catering. Eventually, aged 14, I persuaded my parents to have me moved. They agreed, as much because they worried about poor nutrition. I went to Ogilvie House, which was an official boarding house. Interestingly, my move encouraged a wave of complaints and within a year Whinmount was closed down by the school and all the kids were moved elsewhere. I suspect the rector was unaware of how bad it had been. By 1960, society in general was becoming more enlightened and the school acted very quickly in response to the complaints. I think the house had been operational from about 1949 to 1961. Ogilvie House seemed like paradise in contrast, excellent food and a very caring housemaster and mistress ... There was very little bullying and a much kinder atmosphere as the 1960s moved on.¹¹⁰

108 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.39.

109 Morrison's Academy, Academy House Correspondence, 1979–80, at MOR-000000040, p.2.

110 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in letter of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950–65), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.83–4.

It is encouraging that change followed complaint, but it is woeful that it took a decade to uncover the deficiencies in the care provided in Whinmount. Morrison's systems and practices should have been such as to ensure that the rector knew what conditions were like for the children in *all* boarding houses. It is clear that simply did not happen; all too often what happened in the boarding house stayed in the boarding house.

'Robert' was a day pupil but was aware of, and saw, abusive treatment of boarders as he got older:

You were allowed to approach a boarding house and saw some of the antics there. We considered them normal. There was a policy in the boarding house that if you didn't eat your breakfast you got it for your tea. This could be distressing for me to watch it, and for the child going through it, and the physical violence associated with it. I saw this.¹¹¹

This begs the question: if a child viewed the treatment as distressing, why did the adults in the boarding house not see it that way too, and stop it happening?

For many, Dalmhor was regarded as one of the worst houses, if not the worst. Iain Leighton remembered a conversation with a former teacher at Morrison's:

I spoke to a ... teacher at Morrison's who became a very close friend of mine in the last 25 years ... I asked him if Dalmhor was considered the worst house to go to as a boarding house in my day and he said yes ... there was no doubt about it, that if you were in one of the other houses then the last thing you wanted was to be moved

to Dalmhor because Dalmhor had a bad reputation.¹¹²

'Dalmhor had a bad reputation.'

It speaks volumes that staff knew but nothing was done. Children simply had to accept the unacceptable as the norm.

'Geoff', another Dalmhor boarder, when asked if the house was viewed as particularly bad, said:

It was never discussed. I have a vague recollection that some were better than others. So, for example, there was a smaller boarding house, I forget the name of it, directly opposite the north gate to the school ... the vibe I always got was that the boys there always seemed to be fairly happy ... There was a bigger boarding house called Glen Earn where I always had a feeling that that was a more difficult boarding house ... the vibe I had was that ... there were issues, there were troubles.¹¹³

Conditions could be as bad in the girls' houses. 'Jane' explained:

from 1968 until I thankfully and prematurely left in 1973 due to the intolerable conditions which interrupted me completing my senior school education ... [m]y parents were stationed in Cyprus with the RAF and I believe their overseas location contributed to the cruelty that was dealt out to me over that period due to the lack of communication at that time ... [I] was a resident at Ogilvie House in Victoria Terrace under the auspices of a housemistress. My story

111 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.5.

112 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.125.

113 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.98-9.

of living with this cruel woman is too long and too disturbing for me to write about.¹¹⁴

'Polly' had a housemistress who was emotionally abusive at times:

The first year I would say she was probably fairly stable, but after that the moods started, and it was a bit like a rollercoaster, up and down, so you never really knew when she was going to be moody, then other times she could be extremely nice to you. It wasn't a personal thing with people, it was just she was moody, so if you were in her way you would get the shouting or get told off ... She was incredibly thunderous by the end. I was relieved to come back and find a new housemistress. In fact, I was dreading going back, and I finally walked in and there was this new lady there. I didn't even care who it would be, it was just not this thunderous mood and shouting ... It was verbally aggressive.¹¹⁵

'Polly' found that the environment within the Knockearn building did not help: 'It was quite shabby, to be frank ... it wasn't homely, it was utilitarian.'¹¹⁶

The temperament of individual housemasters could be such as to lead to emotional abuse. Iain Leighton remembered Dalmhor as 'a loveless, cold place where you were frightened of telling a joke or laughing because it would be frowned on by the housemaster. You couldn't laugh, especially on a Sunday.'¹¹⁷

The systemic failures at Morrison's were neatly summed up by 'Anna':

If there were issues of abuse in the boarding house the housemistress was the person to have approached. There were house meetings every week but I don't think they were for us to raise any issues. They were mainly for her to tell us what was going on ... She would never have asked us how we were getting on.¹¹⁸

Other similar themes of life in the various boarding houses emerged in the evidence and I accept them as being accurate.

No induction

Whilst rules and regulations may have existed for the benefit of the school and the housemasters and housemistresses, the children – more often than not – were not informed of the rules on arrival, at least in the decades that followed the Second World War. There was no induction. 'Colin', a boarder in Dalmhor House, summarised his experience in relation to learning the rules and regulations:

You kind of learned it by osmosis, or you were probably told by one of the senior boys if you did something or – you know, 'This is what you do and don't forget it', sort of thing. Or if you did something that was wrong then you learned about it. But, no, I don't remember – perhaps other than, 'Right, these are your mealtimes, this is your bedtime, this is your locker for your personal gear, this is where you clean your shoes, this is where you store your sports gear', other than that I don't remember any details.¹¹⁹

114 Transcript, day 227: 'Jane' (former pupil, 1968–73), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.60–1.

115 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.41–2, 68.

116 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.43.

117 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.110–11.

118 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.19, paragraph 83.

119 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.15.

'Geoff' had a similar experience:

The boarding house operated to a very strict timetable, probably for practical reasons. I can remember it being explained what the daily routine would be, but beyond that you tended to pick up the rules as you went along. For example, the rules to do with attending sports matches on a Saturday morning, and things like that, you just picked up as you went along. We were told all our possessions were kept in the matron's room, and simple administrative things like that, but I have no recollection of anything beyond that ... It felt very strange and impersonal ... I don't remember there being any meeting or assembly to talk to us about the possibility of homesickness and who we could go to about it. Although I do remember the first matron coming into the dormitory at night to comfort boys who were very upset.¹²⁰

'Geoff' added that boys continued to be upset beyond that first night.¹²¹

Iain Leighton's experience of the rules was that he 'wasn't given any kind of code of conduct when I arrived at the school. It was all a steep learning curve, in my case practically vertical.'¹²²

Change occurred in the 1960s and 1970s when there was evidence of a buddy system. Sometimes it operated harshly. 'Angus's' experience was as follows:

When we arrived at Academy House we were paired with an experienced

junior boy. If you contravened the rules in the first week, your buddy took the punishment so it was up to your buddy to keep you on the straight and narrow. In the second week, you were both punished. After the first two weeks, you were on your own.¹²³

In Knockearn, by 1978 there was an annual buddy system in operation, in which senior boarders were buddied up with a junior. 'Polly' described it as 'an annual thing ... So as I got older I got younger people to buddy with. The idea was you showed them the ropes and your experience and looked after them.'¹²⁴ Her experience of the buddy system was

mixed. I think I was lucky. Sometimes I got some nice seniors that chatted to me, and then other times you just got ones that just felt they had a bit of power over you, so they would make you do all the duties while they just did whatever they wanted to do.¹²⁵

By the late 1990s, handbooks for the remaining houses were published and progressively updated. That development was long overdue.¹²⁶

Culture of silence

Some house staff were not interested in the pastoral care of the boarders. The children were aware of that. On the prospect of confiding in staff, for instance, 'Colin' explained: 'I could have spoken to either of the housemasters I experienced ... but I never did and they never checked on how

120 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.66-8.

121 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.66-8.

122 Transcript, day 237: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.108.

123 Written statement of 'Angus' (former pupil, 1967-c.1975), at WIT-1-000000694, p.4, paragraph 13.

124 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.48-9.

125 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.49.

126 See Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037; and *Employee Handbook*, 2020, at MOR-000000095.

any of us were doing. They were in fact considered by all the boys as “the enemy” who were not to be confided in.¹²⁷

‘Geoff’ felt similarly. As he saw it, the culture discouraged disclosure:

The culture was that ... it never even crossed your mind that you might talk to an adult. There was this gulf between the adult staff and the children where it wasn’t that you would be scared to go and say, it was just cultural. You were expected to deal with life’s problems on your own It was more of the alpha male mentality of – there was this constant pressure of ... you are at the school, we have our standards to uphold, just deal with the problems ... if you found that you weren’t coping with the situation in the school and the boarding house, it was seen as a personal failing of you.¹²⁸

‘You were expected to deal with life’s problems on your own.’

‘Polly’ accepted that, in theory, she could have spoken to her housemistress:

To be fair, she didn’t have a closed door [but] it wasn’t policy amongst us to go and see her ... And actually we didn’t want her in our lives, so we weren’t happy to go and see her. It was only if someone was really sick or something that we’d actually bother to [go and see the housemistress].¹²⁹

‘Anna’ would not have told staff of the bullying she endured, for ‘[t]elling matron would only have led to more intense bullying’.¹³⁰

At Dalmhor in the early 1960s, ‘Thompson’ became aware of an initiation ritual to prevent clipping. It was shortly after he started at the school, and he was aged seven at the time. New boys had to run a gauntlet of other boys in the house who hit them with pillowcases filled with books and other items; this was to teach them that clipping was not acceptable. That was abusive. School management and house staff should have been aware of that aspect of the house culture and should have addressed it. Some may have done but not in Dalmhor at that time. As ‘Thompson’ added: ‘The staff all knew and were witnesses to much of the abuse that went on anyway.’¹³¹

Lack of engagement and a failure to notice

House staff did not effectively encourage children to engage with them and disclose any of their worries. Whilst their job descriptions made no explicit reference to the care, wellbeing, and nurture of children, that is no excuse. The need to do so should have been obvious. Instead, children were not afforded that support. For instance, when asked if he was encouraged by the housemasters to seek their support, Colin explained: ‘I wouldn’t have thought so, no. I don’t remember really. No, I would have said no.’¹³²

127 Transcript, day 226: ‘Colin’ (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.17.

128 Transcript, day 226: ‘Geoff’ (former pupil, 1963–8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.94–5.

129 Transcript, day 225: ‘Polly’ (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.46.

130 Transcript, day 226: read-in statement of ‘Anna’ (former pupil, 1954–8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.53.

131 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of ‘Thompson’ (former pupil, c.1961–4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.78.

132 Transcript, day 226: ‘Colin’ (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.17.

In a similar vein, 'Geoff' explained that interaction with staff 'was only on a management basis. If you needed something or if you had a question about something or you had broken something that needed repaired, you engaged with the staff, with the matron more than the housemaster. We had very, very little engagement with the housemaster as younger boys.'¹³³

Boarding house staff were viewed as remote. 'Colin' explained: 'Yes, I think they were, yes. They were there I suppose to lay down the law as a senior figure, but other than that, yes, they - on a day-to-day basis I would have said, no, they were not there to interact with at all.'¹³⁴

Moreover, in some houses, staff were not always physically present. 'Geoff's' experience was: 'No, they were never in the common room. The housemaster might have come in and spoken to somebody and gone out, but there was never any constant adult presence in any part of the boarding house ... even the prefects were not a constant presence there.'¹³⁵ This lack of supervision allowed boys in their mid-teens - those aged 14 to 16 - the freedom to bully and abuse younger boys. It was a common theme that abuse inflicted by other boys was much worse for the younger boarders.

'Polly' felt staff would be unaware of what was going on in parts of the boarding house because 'they weren't there so they couldn't see'.¹³⁶ Plainly, much went unnoticed: 'The school would be horrified if they knew that, by the time I was in fourth year, several of the senior girls in my house were having sex ... I think they were naive by that point. They

hadn't stopped to consider or watch people's behaviour. They didn't know us.'¹³⁷

That comment - 'they didn't know us' - speaks volumes about the deficiencies inherent in the boarding house systems for which Morrison's was responsible. These deficiencies were not addressed but they should have been.

Discipline

Morrison's, in its section 21 Part A response, stated in relation to questions about discipline:

Any description of the 'routine' would be incomplete without mention of discipline and aspects of the ethos of the time. There was considerable emphasis on manners, cleanliness, tidiness, and punctuality; all underpinned by an extensive set of rules ... Breaches to any of these rules and regulations could, and certainly would if persistent, result in punishment of one form or another. The more serious offences may have resulted, at least for boys, in 'six of the best' from a class teacher or rector. 'Six of the best' was a reference to a pupil receiving corporal punishment, usually the cane being struck (6 times) on the hand ... In the boys' school prefects too were responsible for enforcing discipline on matters such as dropping litter, general presentation and punctuality and were allowed to issue 'lines' which would have to be handed in to the Prefects Room the following day. The girls' school appears not to have devolved matters of discipline to prefects ... For a boarding house to operate with any semblance of order required an

133 Transcript day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.70.

134 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.18.

135 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.81-2.

136 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.61.

137 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.76.

'my saddest memory is the total absence of help from the prefects and my senior colleagues'

hierarchy of rules and regulations which would have been set by the Housemaster/ Housemistress or have evolved over time ... Breaches would result in warnings or punishment and may have been in the form of 'lines' or additional duties such as dish washing or polishing shoes.¹³⁸

Applicants enlarged on that statement: in the male houses beatings by prefects were commonplace and, in the absence of adequate supervision, often abusive.

Prefects

At Morrison's, there were school prefects and also house prefects. School prefects were appointed by the school and had jurisdiction within the school. In the houses, '[i]t was the housemaster who chose the prefects to run ... discipline on his behalf'.¹³⁹ 'George' had 'no idea what principles he used but it is probably safe to say that [he] picked boys that matched his own personality'.¹⁴⁰ The most senior prefect in a boarding house was the house captain; he was afforded some privileges, such as having his own room.

There was no evidence of prefects or house captains receiving guidance, training, or mentoring in relation to their powers and duties. Inevitably, much would depend on the personality of the individual. Yet the wielding of those powers led, on occasion, to dreadful results. Alasdair Liddle described Academy House in the 1950s: 'There were other instances of bullying or downright

criminal assault, but my saddest memory is the total absence of help from the prefects and my senior colleagues. I assume that they were all too terrified of [the house captain].'¹⁴¹

'Thompson' summed up his three years as a Morrison's boarder this way:

When the housemaster was away the prefects gave out the beatings hundreds of times. It happened all the time, and you just got used to it. The prefects were only meant to give a maximum of three strikes on your backside, and they did it with a wooden drumstick. What the prefects did, though, so they could give more than three strikes, was to try and hit you on the exact same spot on your backside that they had just hit so they didn't make more than three marks. I used to get battered because I would flinch and stutter. It happened all the time from big people. You got beaten for any reason at Morrison's.¹⁴²

It was, however, possible for prefects to be a good influence and use their powers constructively. As 'Colin' remembered:

Latterly I was made to be a house prefect ... I can't remember whether it was fifth form or sixth form, but I remember being sort of criticised to a degree for not being strict enough. I didn't want to beat people ... For instance, rather than beat one of the younger boys for whatever

138 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, pp.18-19.

139 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, p.67.

140 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, p.67.

141 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, p.88.

142 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.75.

misdemeanour, I thought there is no point in, not beating necessarily, but giving them a punishment, and writing out lines, 'I must not do this, that and the other' one hundred times is just a mindless occupation and it serves no purpose whatsoever other than occupy time. And so rather than that, I would think, well, I have been through the same system, you are getting to third, fourth, fifth year or whatever, I know that you are in third year or you are in second year, you are going to have to learn at school this poem for an exam, so, here, learn this poem or learn part of this poem, rather than writing out one hundred lines, or whatever, which does you no good whatsoever, so let's put it to some good use. So 'Go and learn that poem', or learn a few stanzas of this poem, or whatever it is, 'and come and see me in three or four days and recite it back to me'. So it gave more of a purpose to any sort of punishment.¹⁴³

That was a trend mentioned by a number of applicants. It reflected a positive move away from engaging in abusive violence being opted for by some prefects when it came to matters of discipline.

The house experience

The transition from large Victorian private residences to boarding houses was a stark one. They were largely Spartan places with no scope for privacy. Washing facilities were communal, and shared baths remained the norm into the late 1970s. 'Polly' explained that at Knockearn

having a bath in the evening was on a rota every two days. I shared with somebody and sometimes we were in the bath at the same time and sometimes one after the other. At one point we all got boils on our legs because we were sharing bath water. There were probably two or three girls using the same water. Then we had baths removed and more showers installed. That was a revelation ... we were really encouraged to take the shower and very few people ever had a bath.¹⁴⁴

Individual houses also accommodated more than 30 pupils. Dalmhor is used here as an example, although arrangements were broadly similar across the boarding estate. It had five dormitories accommodating between six and nine boys, up to a maximum of 33.¹⁴⁵ Pupils would progress from one to another as they got older but would tend to stay with their same initial group. The dormitories were usually cold, and windows would be frosted during the winter.¹⁴⁶ 'Polly' recalled: 'It was freezing in the winter as there was just one night storage heater upstairs for four big rooms.'¹⁴⁷ Few, if any, were warm and inviting, and there was a lack of privacy.

Iain Leighton described both the positive and negative aspects of Dalmhor:

I remember the views from our dormitory towards ... Comrie in the distance. That is a lovely memory for me. In 1963, you could see the early-morning steam train coming through Crieff and going to Comrie. That was a wonderful sight and a happy sight for me. I remember some nights were so cold because there were no duvets. The beds were pre-war, and if

143 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.29-30.

144 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.47-8.

145 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.11; Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.24.

146 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.47.

147 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.45.

they were First World War beds then they were 50 years old. The springs had sprung and when you got into bed your bottom nearly touched the floor. The blankets were like out of a prison. We had sheets and blankets that had to be folded in a particular way. If you didn't attain that standard of excellence then everything had to be stripped and started again, very much as if you were in the army. There was no heating in these dormitories at all and we had to sleep with the windows open. They were obsessed with keeping windows open so any germs could fly out. I remember waking up and seeing icicles at the window. I hated the cold and winter. The winter of 1963 was so cold, how we didn't freeze to death I don't know.¹⁴⁸

It should, of course, be remembered that children were not being deprived of duvets – they were not commonly used as bedding in the UK in the 1960s. Sheets and blankets were, at that time, the norm.

Discipline in the dormitories was harsh. 'Colin' explained:

There was a lights-out time, it was 7.30 for the small boys, and then 8 o'clock, then 8.30 and so on, and once the lights went out there had to be total silence, otherwise somebody would come up and listen at the door and then the consequences were physical.¹⁴⁹

'Colin' added that the prefects and housemasters would creep around and listen at the door: 'They probably knew where all the squeaks in the floorboards were.'¹⁵⁰ If noise was heard they would burst in,

demanding to know who had been talking and 'punish the culprit by hitting him on the backside over his pyjamas with a slipper or some other implement'.¹⁵¹

Similar accounts were given of Knockearn. 'Polly' remembered it had five dormitory rooms, and the girls were initially housed in a room of four and progressed to a larger dormitory. She disliked life in the larger dormitory:

Well, P7, I was growing up a bit, there was absolutely no privacy. And by that point in time the etiquette at night was you closed – the housemistress would close the door and you were meant to shut up and go to sleep, but if anyone decided to have a chit-chat, which was normal, girls do, then we would all get into trouble. And I just hated that, oh God, what is coming tonight? Whereas in a smaller room it didn't happen so much, you had less chance of people having conversation. So that is why I hated it.¹⁵²

Communal spaces

Each boarding house had a common room and a prep room, where the children spent most of their time when not at school or sport. There was not always scope for splitting age groups, due to the lack of space. As 'Geoff' said:

There was this constant mix of a wide age range, from 8 year olds to 18 year olds. You were constantly in a mixed age group in the boarding house. Whereas when you went to the school you were often just your own year group, you would be in a group of your peers.¹⁵³

148 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.93–4.

149 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.23–4.

150 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.24.

151 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.24.

152 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.40–1.

153 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963–8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.75.

That was far from ideal. Coupled with inadequate supervision, this allowed abuse to take place.

Dining rooms and food

Up until 1978, when catering was centralised,¹⁵⁴ all meals were taken at the individual boarding houses. 'Mealtimes were in hushed whispers and mostly in silence.'¹⁵⁵ 'It was a Dickensian setting and prayers were said by the housemaster at the start of every meal, and then you could chat, as long as you weren't very loud.'¹⁵⁶

Much evidence was given about the nature, type, and quality of the food, which was not surprising. As Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15) observed: 'Institutional food can be quite difficult to produce, really good quality food that appeals to the entire school population.'¹⁵⁷ Boarding houses were not catering for the entire school population, however, and, at least in the 1960s and 1970s, little or no effort was made by Morrison's Academy to cater for the needs of children who had lived abroad or had different dietary needs.

'Thompson', a boy born and brought up in India, recalled:

I was used to rice, dhal, and curries, decent food, and I remember at my first meal I had to ask what we were eating. I was told it was rabbit, and it was disgusting. I couldn't eat the stuff. The only thing I could eat when I was there was potatoes. I just wasn't used to that kind of food. I had eaten meat. We had chicken and goat in India but not beef, and certainly nothing like the kind of stuff we were being served up

at Morrison's. I hated the food and didn't eat it. My brother would eat my food. If you didn't eat your meals, that was it. You went without ... I used to eat dried rice with water at night to make the hunger go away. It would be handed out by the other boys. The staff just did not care one iota about us at Morrison's.¹⁵⁸

Mercifully, that was no longer the case by the 1990s. By then, as Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001) said:

The presence of an increasing multi-ethnic mix of students added to the culture and helped broaden the horizons of a mainly local day-school population. For example, the recruitment of many Muslim students resulted in the refectory ordering only halal food, which was prepared for the whole school community. Facilities were provided for students to pray at set times during the day in accordance with their religious observance.¹⁵⁹

Children from abroad

For many years, a substantial number of Morrison's boarders were the children of parents working abroad. Initially, they came from the Empire or the Commonwealth and, later, following successful recruitment drives for new pupils, from the Far East.

Commercial reality and societal change meant that conditions at the school improved for students from abroad from the 1990s. Prior to that, however, little consideration seems to have been given to supporting the emotional, cultural, and/or dietary needs of children transitioning to Morrison's Academy from abroad.

154 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.17.

155 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.75-6.

156 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.95.

157 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.29.

158 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.71-2.

159 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.141.

'Geoff' explained what it was like for a boy who came from an island in the Pacific:

My mother, who grew up in colonial India ... talked at great length to me about how she found it was a complete culture shock coming to the UK. I think [he] would have found a similar experience going from a colonial expat tropical island culture [and] coming to cold Perthshire. He would have found great difficulty. And I don't remember him getting very much, if any, support to deal with the emotional and cultural side of that transition.¹⁶⁰

Iain Leighton arrived at Morrison's from Hong Kong when he was aged 11:

My father drove me down and we arrived at Dalmhor. We met the housemaster for the first time. He was wearing a three-piece suit ... He had Brylcreemed hair, a thin man whose hands were cold. He said he wanted me to meet some other boys who I would be sharing a dormitory with. There was a chap ... who I am still friendly with. I just remember at that time you came into the foyer of Dalmhor and you had to take your shoes off and put slippers on. I remember going to the window of the common room where we would do prep and waving goodbye to my father. I didn't cry at all. I remember going to the housemaster and saying I was used to having a shower at 6.30. I asked him where the showers were and where I could get a towel. He had a fit and asked me where I thought I was. He said I wasn't in Hong Kong now, and they didn't have a single shower in the whole of Crieff. I think he made that up. At the time

I wondered what I was going to do. He told me I would have one bath a week. I distinctly remember thinking that was awful. He said I was going to share the bath with [another] boy ... I wondered who that was and it turned out to be a boy three times my size who would take up the whole bath. I was horrified within half an hour of arriving there. I was thinking I was going to stink ... The cook ... would come out carrying a huge metal teapot she would replenish now and again. I had a hatred of tea leaves and had been a bit spoilt in Hong Kong. When I came back from school, the amah would bring me tea in a wee silver teapot alongside a wee silver milk jug and wee silver tea strainer. In Morrison's on my first morning, all I could see was big chunks coming out of the spout for these other boys. I was not happy about this at all. When she came to me and asked me to put up my cup, I told her I didn't want to be a nuisance but could she bring me a tea strainer. That went down like a lead balloon. She told the housemaster I was being very fussy and I wanted a tea strainer and everybody laughed at me. I was given the name 'Tea Leaves', and within two years my name was abbreviated to 'Leaf'. When I go to school for a reunion now, I am still called Leaf, not Iain.¹⁶¹

He summed up the transition 'from a happy, loving environment to an environment in a boarding house in Morrison's Academy which is a bit like something from Dickens' as 'so traumatic that I know I lost a lot of weight. It was like going from white to black.'¹⁶²

160 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.86-7.

161 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.91-2, 95-6.

162 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.123.

'If you are going to have any regime then you need to have discipline. In Dalmhor that discipline went beyond what was reasonable.'

Chores

Children were required to carry out chores in the boarding house. Some were reasonable but their nature and extent, and the way in which they were enforced became abusive at times.

'Geoff' explained he had to do chores:

on a Saturday morning ... It was general cleaning. From what I remember, there was sweeping of all of the floors in the upper floors of the house. They were all linoleum covered, there was brown linoleum everywhere, and I think it was just a case of keeping the dust down on the bare linoleum floors. I don't remember boys ever cleaning bathrooms or kitchens, but certainly the corridors and places like the changing room were cleaned out by the boys. I think the boys had to wash down the changing room floor, it was a concrete floor. That level of chore ... I think everybody took a hand.¹⁶³

He also recalled there being a rota for shoe cleaning.¹⁶⁴

'Polly' thought some of the tasks

were fairly acceptable, doing the ironing and that kind of thing, cleaning the kitchen ... When I say ironing, we had to do some shirts on a Sunday, we had to iron 24 shirts on a Sunday, but they were ironed by someone else the rest of the week. We had to make sure the washing went over at the weekend, we had to

make sure the kitchen was kept clean, and just generally there weren't things lying around. There were cleaners coming in to generally clean but there were certain things we had to do.¹⁶⁵

Iain Leighton experienced and witnessed children having to do chores that were excessive, went beyond what was reasonable, and were enforced with thrashings:

The domestic staff were employed to clean the house, but we boys had jobs to do. Someone cleaned the common room one night a week, someone cleaned the dining room one night a week, someone cleaned the hallway one night a week, and so it went on. We cleaned the whole house. These ladies were employed to do the same thing. That always confused me. We were doing work, they were being paid, we weren't. The ritual of bed checking in the morning was very important. If you are going to have any regime then you need to have discipline. In Dalmhor that discipline went beyond what was reasonable. There was the checking of beds by the two most senior prefects and by the housemaster. Not every day by the housemaster. If you didn't come up to scratch then you would be thrashed. It was a very clean place because we boys cleaned the place all the time. That place was spotlessly clean as if you were in the army. That sort of cleanliness.¹⁶⁶

163 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.76-7.

164 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.77.

165 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.51-3.

166 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.103-4.

Fagging

Fagging certainly existed at Morrison's well into the 1960s and possibly into the 1980s in some houses. 'Colin' described it as 'just having your own personal slave to do menial tasks',¹⁶⁷ which could include cleaning shoes, ensuring laces for rugby boots were clean, and carrying schoolbooks and kit bags to school. The norm seemed to be boys from the junior school would carry out the function over a number of years for boys in the fifth and sixth forms. There would be reward in the form of payment and, to a lesser degree, protection.

Iain Leighton provided this assessment:

If you were a fag, unless you had done something terribly wrong, your fag master wouldn't hit you. He didn't want to because you were doing so many menial tasks, washing his rugby kit, ironing his rugby kit, and you cleaned his clothes. He gave you thruppence every week from his pocket money as your wages. You didn't want to be on the wrong footing with the person who chose you as their fag. That person chose you and it was a great honour to be a fag. I remember being a fag to someone who never put a hand on me. He was a very nice man ... I never had my own fag so fagging must have stopped around about 1968 before I was a prefect.¹⁶⁸

For other applicants it was different. More critical experiences of 'fagging' can be found in Chapter 5. Some were clear that it did, in fact, carry on into the 1970s, and in at least in one house, Dalmhor, as late as 1986. 'Polly' remembered:

Oh, it went on. I would say the word was used in boys' houses; it never filtered into our house. It went on in our house but we were - it wasn't to the degree it went on in boys' houses. But, yes, you had to take - seniors would want you to do things for them, yes.¹⁶⁹

Positive aspects

Some applicants who were abused at Morrison's also found some aspects of their experience as boarders there to have been positive ones. Some applicants had entirely positive experiences at Morrison's; they were fortunate to have avoided allocation to the boarding houses where abuse was common, as described in Chapter 5.

'Anna', who was bullied and subjected to physical and emotional abuse, said: 'I should mention that not all my experiences were bad. I feel the entire time spent at Benheath made me the person I am today: tough and resilient.'¹⁷⁰

'Morrison's taught me a lot of things. It wasn't all bad.'

'Robert' acknowledged:

Morrison's taught me a lot of things. It wasn't all bad. I thoroughly enjoyed myself in some classes and in OTC [Officer Training Corps]. I have mixed feelings about the school. Some of the boarders had a hard time of it; it caused them problems in later life. I have spoken to them at reunions. There was a degree of keeping the best and leaving the rest. People shouldn't be treated like that.¹⁷¹

167 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.35.

168 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.109-10.

169 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.49-50. See also [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, pp.15-18, paragraphs 69-77.

170 [Transcript, day 226](#): read-in statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1954-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.55.

171 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.19-20.

Iain Leighton reflected:

On one hand there were these terrible incidents which were upsetting, but on the other hand there were occasions which brought me great joy, like going out on Sunday walks. The last three years of my life at Morrison's Academy and as a boarder were particularly happy and I was doing well. The beatings had stopped, the terrible assaults by prefects had stopped, and I was given responsibility.¹⁷²

He added:

I learned to always be kind to others and to animals. The housemaster hated dogs ... If parents came and they had a dog, then it wasn't allowed in the house. I thought that was mean-spirited, and I can't stand mean-spirited people or people who are off the spectrum because they have such extreme views about things. I can't stand racism. In some respects, I think I became very independent ... Morrison's made me a much stronger person ... I came through that ordeal in Dalmhor as a stronger person, not someone who was pummelled into submission. I have never taken abuse from anyone, certainly after school.¹⁷³

A positive aspect of life at Morrison's was the team spirit developed by many boarding house groups. 'Geoff' said: 'It was a very good thing. Because in the absence of any other social support framework, that was the only thing we had.'¹⁷⁴ And he found that 'because there wasn't the wider social framework, your social framework was your small peer group in the boarding house'.¹⁷⁵

'Polly' found that, for children coming from other parts of the world

[it] was actually one of the uniting factors for us ... We ... understood where we all came from but nobody else could ... When you have lived in foreign countries, maybe Arab countries, for example, or Pakistan, you understand the culture, the noise, the smells, what people wore. So you ... could have empathy with each other and say 'Oh, yes, I can relate to that'. Whereas if you were to say that to somebody who was always living in the UK, they can't relate to your experience. So we had that bonding factor.¹⁷⁶

Boarding house regime change

The boarding house regime did finally evolve into something more positive. 'Colin', who had boarded in Dalmhor, visited the school for a reunion:

It was the first reunion I went to, and as I was leaving Crieff ... I thought I will just nip up to the boarding house. So I went up, knocked on the door, walked in, and I was talking to the matron. I don't know who the housemaster was ... and then this girl walked down the stairs. Whether the house had then become co-ed or sort of a mixed house, or whether it was all girls I don't remember, but certainly physically the house hadn't changed at all. I could have walked around the place with my eyes closed. Anyway, this girl came tripping down the stairs ... and she said to the matron, 'Right, I am just off to the pictures in Perth.' And I looked and thought, what? We wouldn't have been allowed out the door at 6 o'clock on a

172 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.117.

173 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.127-8.

174 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.70.

175 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.99-100.

176 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.39-40.

Saturday evening and yet this girl was going off, by herself as far as I could tell, going into Perth to go to the pictures. I was shocked and stunned that the regime had changed. I don't know when that was, it was probably – I am guessing and saying 1985 or thereabouts.¹⁷⁷

This type of change is covered in Morrison's section 21 Part A response, which states:

There were changes in culture that were driven by external factors – primarily because the norms of society changed significantly in the 1960s and 1970s ... Rules on bounds and visits became more relaxed, thus it became easier to go to the cinema or visit friends who happened to be day pupils.¹⁷⁸

Regime post-1995

I can conclude, on the evidence, that arrangements for child protection, at least from 1999 onwards, evolved in line with new statutory and regulatory requirements.¹⁷⁹

Disciplinary and other policies were produced and reviewed and are now treated as living documents. As Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21) explained:

when any new legislation comes out or any guidance, we would look at our policies ... they are digital records so we can make [that] adjustment. And then I think probably around that time, 2017/2018, we did a full-scale review of all our policies, so I imagine that is when a

cyclical review would take place, but, yes, they are living documents.¹⁸⁰

A significant practical advance was the publication, from the 1990s onwards, of boarding handbooks for staff, pupils, and parents.¹⁸¹ The comparison between the handbooks and the 1932 and 1941 rules is stark. In particular, in the handbooks there is a section entitled 'Your Welfare & Rights'. It includes the following:

Bullying is against the school code and you tell someone – anyone – whom you trust if you are bullied or see other pupils being bullied. You have the opportunity to voice your opinions on most aspects of the running of the house including discussion on routines, rules, and regulations. You have a right to privacy and this should be respected by all living in the house – other boarders and house staff. Everyone should routinely knock before entering bedrooms. If you wish to talk to someone outside the staff, such as an independent counsellor, this can be arranged.¹⁸²

In the *Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, published in 2002, a section on bullying adds that the school's aims are '[t]o encourage all staff within the school to be observant and sensitive to pupils who may exhibit signs of bullying, and to recognise such signs and react to them by taking appropriate action'. In addition, that 'there is an adequate and efficient system in place

177 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958–68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.46–7.

178 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.00043.

179 One significant example was the amendment made by section 35 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, which made it a duty, under section 125 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, of schools' managers or boards to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people whilst resident at a school. It also gave HM Inspectors of Schools the power to inspect a school in order to determine whether pupils' welfare was adequately safeguarded and promoted.

180 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.61.

181 The first dated version is from 1999 with revision made in 2002. It is clear that the first version comes from earlier in the 1990s given the reference to only two houses, Dalmhor (girls) and Academy (boys). Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks, at MOR-000000034 to MOR-000000038.

182 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarders' Handbook*, at MOR-000000034, p.8.

for uncovering incidents of bullying and to provide guidance for staff on appropriate methods of intervention'.¹⁸³

The *Boarding Staff Handbook* of August 1999 is perhaps the most striking. It runs to 40 pages and opens with a 'Boarding Mission Statement' which states: 'Our central task is to provide a caring and lively environment in which pupils can feel at home, valued, secure and able to learn. Our first responsibility is to help the young people in our care to live together as a community.'¹⁸⁴

'Our central task is to provide a caring and lively environment in which pupils can feel at home, valued, secure and able to learn.'

A clear management structure is set out and includes a liaison governor for each house. The job description of housemaster includes that the person will 'be responsible to the Rector for the physical, moral and social well-being of the boys as well as the efficient daily running of the house' and continues: '[they] will ensure that the school's Child Protection Policy is implemented as and when required, and that all staff within the house are conversant with it'.¹⁸⁵ The role of the Child Protection Coordinator is set out in full but, appropriately, it is made clear that protecting children from abuse is everyone's business:

'All adults who have the charge or care of children have a responsibility to ensure that the children in their care are not harmed. All children have the right to be protected from any form of abuse.'¹⁸⁶ Instructions on how to deal with any suspicion of abuse are described.¹⁸⁷

Morrison's was, I accept, trying to respond promptly and properly to the introduction of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. There was, however, a tension between intention and achievement. The transition to an open, healthy, and well-functioning culture was not immediate and, well into the 1990s, Morrison's Academy could be a school of two parts. Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15) remembered meeting a former pupil who clearly experienced a challenging time when a pupil in the 1990s.¹⁸⁸ That echoed the report by HM Inspectors of Schools dated 26 October 1999.¹⁸⁹ Whilst confirming positive aspects, it noted that whilst almost all residential pupils were said to have identified strongly with the school, attitudes to boarding were much more variable.¹⁹⁰

The school was encouraged to

improve the links between house and school staff. In particular, school guidance staff should build on the good start which has been made in taking a more direct interest in the welfare and progress of their boarding pupils. The school should ensure full implementation of

183 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, September 2002, at MOR-000000036, p.19.

184 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.1.

185 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.5.

186 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.31.

187 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.31.

188 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004-15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.19.

189 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030.

190 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.3.

policies outlined in the new handbook for boarding staff, including the well-documented complaints procedures. House staff should be provided with a structured programme of staff development linked to self-evaluation and including consideration of child protection procedures.¹⁹¹

The express reference in the report to the school needing to take a more direct interest in the welfare and progress of their boarding pupils is stark. A follow-up to the 1999 inspection took place in May 2001. The subsequent report stated that '[t]he depute rector was responsible for monitoring the management of the boarding houses and took an active role in supporting many of their activities',¹⁹² and that '[l]inks between school and house staff had also been improved by, for example, sharing the school's programme for personal and social education'.¹⁹³

Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001) said of the period '[s]taff meetings often focused on discussion of current standards of behaviour. Focus group meetings with pupil representatives also allowed discussion on this topic'.¹⁹⁴ He added:

I am confident that any abuse or ill-treatment of a child coming to the attention of staff would have been referred to me. As a small school on a small campus, issues that required investigation or action, minor or major, came to light quickly. The boarding houses had staff present throughout the day and night ... As within the day school

setting, the culture in the boarding houses was one which encouraged students to express their opinions and disclose to staff with whom they felt comfortable. This might be the housemaster or housemistress, their assistants or a member of the domestic support team. Additionally, the two deputy rectors with whom I worked, who had supervisory responsibility for the boarding houses, were highly regarded by the boarding students, who understood the deputy rector's role as confidante.¹⁹⁵

His optimism was misplaced. Morrison's had always been a relatively small school but problems – both minor and major – had not always come to light. Also, assumptions that students will disclose to staff if systems are in place can be dangerous and should not be made.

Simon Pengelley described Morrison's Academy, on his arrival in 2004, as a school that 'had gone through an unsettled period' and 'needed settling rather than changing, because fundamentally I felt that it was a good school'.¹⁹⁶ That unsettling time reflected changes in leadership and, of course, a time when boarding at Morrison's was very much on the wane. He introduced staff appraisals. 'It wasn't there – they had clearly tried various types of appraisal before, but it wasn't a settled system that happened consistently over time'.¹⁹⁷ Records were made in the form of weekly reports.

A joint inspection of Morrison's Academy by HM Inspectorate of Education and the Care

191 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.32–3.

192 HMIE, Letter to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, at SGV-000000757, p.2.

193 HMIE, Letter to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, at SGV-000000757, p.2.

194 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.142.

195 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.144.

196 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.22–3.

197 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.23.

Commission took place in November 2004. The report, dated 22 March 2005, stated:

The ethos in the boarding houses was very good ... Relationships between residential staff and pupils were positive. Pupils appreciated the family-like atmosphere ... Boarders felt safe and well supported in the school. However, not all house staff were seen by pupils as approachable and responsive to their needs. Some pupils preferred to ask fellow pupils for support and advice.¹⁹⁸

The Inspectorate's report also stated that appropriate arrangements were in place for child protection and against bullying; that teaching and non-teaching staff were familiar with the child protection policy and how to implement these procedures; that Childline posters were publicly displayed; that there was an appropriate method of recording accidents or incidents, including incidents of bullying; that recently updated house handbooks for boarders provided clear, consistent guidance of a boarding house's provision and rules; and that there were well-understood arrangements for pupils to make suggestions or raise concerns.¹⁹⁹ It was confirmed that two governors visited each house every term to listen to the views of pupils and staff.²⁰⁰

Accordingly, systems had changed and adaptations made with a view to shifting the focus to child protection. For example, in the period 2004–15 when Simon Pengelley was rector

all the music practice rooms, which are the rooms where you only get one-to-one teaching, we inserted glass in the doors. Obviously you can't have someone supervising every music lesson that is going on, but by having glass in the doors, anyone passing can see what is going on ... And the music teacher knows that.²⁰¹

Response to evidence about the regime

Morrison's did not challenge the accounts of abuse given by former pupils of the school. At the conclusion of the evidence, Gareth Warren, the then rector, acknowledged 'the courage' it had taken for applicants to come forward and give evidence.²⁰²

He accepted there had been systemic failures, saying:

[If] any child, single child ... gets abused, there is systemic failure without a single question of doubt. Why that occurred I think would be in part due to the design of the system being important, so, for example, a lack of oversight. It is very clear that there weren't any policies in place for quality assurance for a pupil voice to be heard.²⁰³

Or, more simply, there was 'a failure in the design of that system to protect children and also the application of it'.²⁰⁴

That was a frank departure from earlier evidence - which he retracted - that 'the failings would have been really down to a lack of implementation of the rules fairly and

198 HMIe, Letter to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, at SGV-000000757, p.5.

199 Transcript, day 228: Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.41–2.

200 Transcript, day 228: Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.45.

201 Transcript, day 228: Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.55–6.

202 Transcript, day 228: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.68.

203 Transcript, day 228: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.69–70.

204 Transcript, day 228: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.71.

‘there was certainly an abdication of duties in terms of the wellbeing and welfare of children’

equally across the boarding houses’.²⁰⁵ That had echoed the school’s section 21 Part B response to SCAI in 2017, which also limited Morrison’s knowledge of abuse to one account of bullying within one boarding house; one teacher touching inappropriately; and a generic acceptance of systemic failure if any child had been abused.²⁰⁶ The difference between Morrison’s section 21 Part B response and the evidence of applicants is striking. An obvious question arises: how could so little be known by those in positions of responsibility who ought to have known what was happening? Limited record-keeping may be one answer but culture, mindset, and an acceptance of the unacceptable is another. It was encouraging to hear, through the rector and the closing submissions on behalf of the school, that Morrison’s does now accept that it failed to protect children from abuse and needed to change.

Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21) accepted that between the 1950s and 1990s, and most probably beyond these dates, there were very real problems with a number of the boarding houses at Morrison’s. He accepted that there seemed to be a clear distinction in culture and ethos between the school on the one hand (albeit there were episodes of individual teacher violence) and the boarding houses on the other:

I think, listening to the applicants and their evidence, that became very apparent,

that there was almost ... a – yes, a very distinct difference in experiences from what they had as a boarder, and then that transitioned to the day school, and they had their education, and they seemed to respect and value that education. But then to go back – the strategies they used to delay often the need to go back to the boarding house became very apparent in their evidence ... I think there was certainly an abdication of duties in terms of the wellbeing and welfare of children by that housemaster ... in delegating ... that discipline and approach, and therefore that manifested itself very much in terms of physical abuse. And underlying that physical abuse was obviously, therefore, the emotional abuse of having that constant fear about what might happen next. So that was the really strong message that came across.²⁰⁷

In relation to Dalmhor in particular, Gareth Warren accepted that problems must have been known about. ‘I think when listening to the evidence there would be certainly a reputation, and I think Simon Pengelley alluded to that. I think you would have to stick your head in the sand not to be aware of particular issues perhaps at certain boarding schools.’²⁰⁸ He agreed with the suggestion put by senior counsel that ‘[i]t can’t have gone unnoticed that some houses were better than others and one was particularly bad ... yet nothing was done.’²⁰⁹

205 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.70.

206 Morrison’s Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.47.

207 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.67–8.

208 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.69.

209 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.71–2.

He concluded his evidence by acknowledging again, with evident sincerity, the courage of the applicants in coming forward, saying: 'We as a school acknowledge the abuse they suffered and again want to reiterate a genuine, wholehearted apology for their suffering and our failings as a school.'²¹⁰

Conclusions about the regime

Families entrusted their children to Morrison's care, believing they would be safe. These children should, at the very least, have been kept safe and protected from abuse and harm. Too many were not adequately protected.

Morrison's, in its section 21 Part A response to SCAI, states that its ethos was '[t]o provide a safe, secure home from home where young people could develop in a relaxed, but structured, environment. Records indicate that the provision of residential care would include a place of residence, laundry, recreation, religious education as well as additional

co-curricular activities.'²¹¹ I accept that Morrison's, for the most part, provided a structured environment. But, for many, it failed to provide what was of paramount importance, namely keeping children safe and protecting them from abuse. As for relaxation, some children were never able to relax, such were their fears of what could happen in their boarding house.

Morrison's had a duty to take reasonable care of the health, safety, and wellbeing of all its pupils.²¹² It failed to do so. There was systemic and serious failure in relation to the lack of supervision of all the boarding houses operated and used by Morrison's.

Some staff breached the trust placed in them by Morrison's and by children and their families.

In short, there were Morrison's pupils who were abused and deprived of what could have been, and should have been, positive childhood experiences of boarding at the school.

210 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.74-5.

211 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.13.

212 Morrison's Academy, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0003, p.11.

The nature and extent of abuse perpetrated by staff and prefects at Morrison's Academy

In previous case study findings, I have set out my findings in relation to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse in separate sections. Thus, for example, instances of physical abuse experienced by pupils at Loretto School, whether within the school classroom setting or within the boarding house, are covered together under the heading 'physical abuse'.

In these findings, I have decided to approach matters differently. That is because the experiences of Morrison's pupils within the school and within their boarding houses - where the culture of one could be very different from the culture of the other - were so separate, distinct, and generally unrelated to each other that it is appropriate to present my findings under two broad headings: 'Abuse within the school' and 'Abuse within the boarding houses'.

4

Abuse within the school

Introduction

Children, including boarders, were physically abused at Morrison's within the school setting, principally by means of excessive corporal punishment inflicted by some staff. Some prefects were emotionally abusive in their use of written punishments in the school setting, and some were physically abusive on the sports field.

I am satisfied that the atmosphere within the school from the 1950s to the mid-1970s was one of severity. This coincides with the period in which J.E.G. Quick was rector. While corporal punishment was still being used in the late 1970s and into the mid-1980s, the applicants who complained about abuse within the school were mostly pupils at Morrison's before then.²¹³ That may reflect a turning point due to a change of leadership in 1974, when J.E.G. Quick retired after a headship spanning a period of 27 years, and possibly also due to the introduction of co-education in 1977. That said, the only punishment book produced by Morrison's dates from the period 1975-9, and it is only in the final year that a reduction in beatings is apparent. From 1975 to 1978 recorded beatings ranged from 133 to 183 per annum, and then dropped to 59 in 1978-9.²¹⁴

There were times when the school's reputation in that period was prioritised above child welfare. If a child was seen to tarnish that reputation, it could lead to physically abusive punishments. For example, as Robert remembered:

A chap I was at school with, who was dyslexic ... told me at a reunion he was chosen to do a reading by the headmaster and he couldn't do it ... The headmaster took him down to his study and gave him a severe beating because he had let the school down.²¹⁵

The man's memory of a wholly inappropriate and abusive use of corporal punishment in the 1950s seemed clear and strong years later.

Attitudes to punishment of children prevalent over the period of this case study

Corporal punishment of children was permitted by the law during much of the period under consideration in this case study. There were, however, clear conditions as to the circumstances in which such punishment could be administered, by whom, and in what manner.²¹⁶

213 In the survey of 1984, Morrison's was still using corporal punishment but was considering its abolition. By 1988, the use of corporal punishment had ceased. Independent Schools Information Service (Scotland), Extract of Survey on Corporal Punishment, 1984, at SCI-000000038.

214 Morrison's Academy, Punishment Records - Punishment Book: 1974-79, at MOR-000000039.

215 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.12-13.

216 For a fuller discussion on the lawfulness of corporal punishment of children in Scotland see Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), pp.346-57; and [Appendix B](#).

In 1964, Lord Guthrie provided a helpful distinction between punishments used by teachers to discipline a pupil and physical abuse:

There is no doubt that a schoolteacher is vested with disciplinary powers to enable him to do his educational work and to maintain proper order in class and in school, and it is therefore largely a matter within his discretion whether, and to what extent, the circumstances call for the exercise of these powers by the infliction of chastisement ... It is only if there has been an excess of punishment over what could be regarded as an exercise of disciplinary powers that it can be held to be an assault.²¹⁷

On the evidence, it is clear to me that the physical punishment of children within the school setting at Morrison's was often excessive to the point of being abusive. When this was the case, the physical punishment was of such a nature as to probably have amounted to assault.

The Morrison's approach

'Jack', referring to the punishment regime and, in particular, the practices of the rector, Mr Quick, explained that he

really got the impression it was a free for all ... I know that Mr Quick himself administered corporal punishment for more severe things in his office. I personally didn't suffer anything by him but he did administer it to other boys. The use of corporal punishment varied in

terms of how frequent and structured it was across the staff.²¹⁸

It usually involved using a leather strap - the 'Lochgelly tawse' - but occasionally a ruler.²¹⁹ The punishment was almost always administered on the hand or wrist in front of the class. 'Jack' 'was not aware of any oversight of the use of corporal punishment by the headmaster'.²²⁰ Furthermore, he

got the impression that none of the teachers were singing off the same hymn sheet as to how and when corporal punishment would be applied. I didn't get the impression that there was some sort of handbook that guided teachers how and when to use corporal punishment because they all had different methods.²²¹

He did not recall punishments being recorded.



A Lochgelly tawse

J.E.G. Quick was rector from 1947 to 1974 so the impact of his leadership - or lack thereof - was significant; there seems to have been

217 Gray v Hawthorn (1964) JC 69, pp.75-6.

218 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.9, paragraph 34.

219 The tawse, commonly known as the Lochgelly tawse after the town where the most popular model was manufactured, was widely used in Scotland to administer corporal punishment until the second half of the 1980s. Children in other institutions investigated by SCAI were physically abused by adults who used it as an implement, as my findings in relation to other case studies have explained. See also '[How the Tawse Left its Mark on Scottish Pupils](#)', *BBC News*, 22 February 2017.

220 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.9, paragraph 34.

221 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.10, paragraph 38.

little or no guidance given to staff as to how they should approach the punishment or criticism of children. 'George', a pupil at the end of Quick's tenure, stated:

[I could] attest to rampant institutionalised physical and emotional abuse [at Morrison's] during my time there ... The punishment rules of both the school, Morrison's Academy, and the various boarding houses that the school ran were quite simple. The head of the school, the teachers, and the boarding housemasters were permitted to punish one in any way they saw fit. They could use a fearsome 20-inch-long leather strap, the soles of their leather shoes, or indeed anything else that came to hand. There was no recourse to objecting to the punishment; you simply took it and hoped you would not cry during this event. The strap was applied to the palm of the hand and the shoes were applied to your backside. There was no limit on the number of times one could be hit.²²²

'The head of the school, the teachers, and the boarding housemasters were permitted to punish one in any way they saw fit.'

'Robert' thought Quick was

a bit sadistic if you had to go to him for punishment. He would take a polished wooden box out and give you the choice of what implement you wanted him to beat you with. If he was provoked or thought someone had let the school down, he would throw you about his study.²²³

'Robert' also recalled '[o]ne teacher, a music teacher, took off one of the tawse of the belt so it would hurt more. He was crazy.'²²⁴ In common with other schools in the case study, some Morrison's teachers not only used corporal punishment inappropriately and excessively but even achieved notoriety amongst the pupils for their brutality.

No records exist that show teachers were warned or sanctioned for these excessive punishments. Nor did any witness speak to that having happened. Morrison's appears to have failed to recognise that staff were physically abusing pupils. On the available evidence, the school failed to notice what was happening and to address it. If in fact they did, they failed to keep records of having done so. All these were significant failings and are indicative of poor leadership. At best, they show a casual lack of oversight and, at worst, a reckless approach to management. Interestingly, from witness accounts, one teacher – James Flett – was barred from belting children after causing serious injury, although that approach was not echoed by the school in its overall policies and practice and certainly not reflected in its valedictory comments on Flett's retiral, as referred to below.

Physical abuse by teachers

The use of corporal punishment at Morrison's during most of the period investigated was common.

Implements were often used. 'Colin' remembered 'the geography teacher ... used to use the tawse occasionally and he also used to throw the chalk duster ... which could be quite painful if it connected'.²²⁵

222 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.63-4.

223 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.16.

224 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.15.

225 [Written statement of 'Colin'](#) (former pupil, 1958-68), at WIT-1-000000529, p.18, paragraph 95.

‘Corporal punishment consisted of the belt and sometimes a ruler.’

Corporal punishment was so common that it became normalised. ‘Jack’ was charitable in his recollection:

In most cases there was a justification for its use and it was usually behaviour related. It was used for things like running in corridors, talking in class, and so on. They were offences that would seem fairly minor nowadays but that was the framework we were in at that time and I think most people accepted it. There were some instances, however, where I felt the use of corporal punishment was totally inappropriate.²²⁶

Some teachers inflicted not only excessive but also disproportionate corporal punishment. ‘John’, capturing the fact that the abuse lay not only in the physical harshness of the beatings, but also in the inadequacy of the justifications for it that were relied on, summed it up this way:

Corporal punishment consisted of the belt and sometimes a ruler. There were canes that hung outside the headmaster’s office but I don’t remember them being used. The ruler was used if you were sitting down. When you received the belt it was usually six times you were hit on your hand. The belt was given for things as small as forgetting a pen or a jotter. It was sometimes given for poor educational attainment such as not following the teaching properly or not hitting the targets that were set. Things that would maybe go to the headmaster would be things that had gone too far, like skiving.²²⁷

‘Robert’ said:

If the kids were a bit unruly then teachers had to give out corporal punishment as a last resort to get them to understand. I have seen a teacher belt a whole class. We were a bit unruly and we were warned. Twenty-eight boys were belted. They all lined up, and the teacher was knackered by the end.²²⁸

Corporal punishment was often used for minor infractions. ‘Gregor’ recalled: ‘in secondary three ... I got belted for reading a book in class. I was ahead of the class in maths. I had finished my maths work and started reading a novel, I can’t remember what.’²²⁹

‘Jack’ had unhappy memories of an art teacher ‘who fairly regularly used corporal punishment. Any misbehaviour from a boy would result in them receiving the belt.’²³⁰

Too often, corporal punishment was resorted to where to use it at all was not justified. Forgetting a pen, forgetting a jotter, failing in academic achievement, or simply reading a book did not justify corporal punishment. Nor can there ever have been justification for an entire class of children being beaten en masse. These were, rather, the hallmarks of an abusive environment.

A punishment book exists for a period from 1974 – as it should have done before then. The most common reason for belting children recorded in it was one that did not justify the beltings that were administered, namely that the children failed to do their

226 [Written statement of ‘Jack’](#) (former pupil, 1957–70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.13, paragraph 46.

227 [Written statement of ‘John’](#) (former pupil, 1967–72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.14, paragraph 51.

228 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of ‘Robert’ (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.14–15.

229 [Written statement of ‘Gregor’](#) (former pupil, 1976–85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.24, paragraph 117.

230 [Written statement of ‘Jack’](#) (former pupil, 1957–70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.13, paragraph 47.

‘two teachers used belts on the basis that later in the day you would commit an offence’

prep. There are other similarly inappropriate examples. For example, two S3²³¹ pupils were belted for ‘inexcusable absence from a school rugby match’,²³² while corporal punishment was inflicted on three P7²³³ pupils for ‘untidiness’.²³⁴

It is also revealing that in the school year 1974–5 over half of all beatings (69 out of 133) were carried out by a single P7 teacher. That included belting 13 P7 pupils on the same day for ‘carelessness’²³⁵ and eight on another day for ‘inattention’.²³⁶ In 1975–6 a different teacher belted 13 S2 pupils because ‘[p]rep not entered in HW [homework] diary’.²³⁷ It suggests that teachers were not being adequately managed and excess was allowed to continue and to thrive when it should have been stopped.

Violent teachers

Some teachers certainly were deliberately and excessively abusive in their treatment of children, using the veneer of discipline to mask their propensity to violence. Some remained in post for decades.

Iain Leighton remembered:

two teachers who used ... belts, whether you had committed an offence or not, on the basis that later in the day you would commit an offence so you might as well be

belted now. One was the maths teacher. She was 4 foot 6 and she relished taking the belt down ... She used the belt with finesse and made an Olympic sport of it. She would take a hop, skip, and a jump and take the belt down on someone’s hand and that really hurt. She brought the belt right to the back of her head and then brought it right down. I got the belt from her, and I saw other pupils get the belt. Back in those days the belt was a daily occurrence. Back then it was the norm.²³⁸

The other teacher Iain Leighton remembered was

an old chemistry teacher ... if your legs were exposed he liked to come round and thwack them so that the leather strap wrapped round your legs. That was painful because you were wearing shorts. If you asked what that had been for, he would say it was because later on you would do some mischief and you might as well be punished now. That wasn’t fair. That happened to me but not that often. I wasn’t really a naughty pupil.²³⁹

It may be that he was remembering Mr Husband, a science teacher. ‘Jack’ recalled that Mr Husband’s use of corporal punishment was ‘excessive and inappropriate’:²⁴⁰

231 S3 pupils would have been 14–15 years old.

232 Morrison’s Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039, p.3.

233 P7 pupils would have been 11–12 years old.

234 Morrison’s Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039, p.6.

235 Morrison’s Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039, p.5.

236 Morrison’s Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039, p.7.

237 Morrison’s Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039, p.13.

238 [Transcript, day 227](#): Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.117–18.

239 [Transcript, day 227](#): Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.118.

240 [Written statement of ‘Jack’](#) (former pupil, 1957–70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.14, paragraph 49.

[He] would give you the belt at his desk on your hand but he would also walk about class and give boys a whack with his belt across the back of their legs if they weren't paying attention. When he did that it came as a complete unexpected shock. Sometimes he would get you to stand up then hit you with his belt on the spot. His use of corporal punishment seemed entirely random. It was as if he just felt angry at someone then would just hit them. Sometimes another boy would do exactly the same thing and not get hit at all. That left you feeling a little bit on edge in his classes. Paradoxically his were the most unruly classes.²⁴¹

An art teacher was equally disproportionate in his disciplining of pupils. 'Jack' remembered

one occasion when I was around about 11 or 12, sometime between 1963 and 1965, that one boy ... did something relatively minor ... like knocking over a pot of paint ... [The teacher] confronted the class ... and asked who had done [it] ... Nobody answered him so his response was to punish the entire class. He lined us all up and it took him the whole lesson to belt the lot of us. He hit us each three or four times with the belt across our hands ... His actions are an extreme example during my time at Morrison's of how corporal punishment was inappropriately used.²⁴²

Another example of the excessive and disproportionate use of corporal punishment by a teacher was provided by 'John'. He recalled

a very highly thought of games master. If he felt boys were underperforming on the

rugby pitch he would 'drop kick' them. You would have to bend over then he would run up as if he was kicking the ball over the posts then kick you full force in your backside. There was no playing around. I think I only ever got it once. However, I remember watching it happening to other boys constantly. If your knees weren't dirty when you came off the rugby pitch you were drop kicked.²⁴³

Two particular teachers were frequently mentioned by applicants as having regularly used excessive and disproportionate corporal punishment.

The French teacher

James Flett, a French teacher (1939-74), was remembered, without any warmth, by several applicants. 'Wallace' remembered him as

quite young, probably aged around 25 to 30. He used to parade around with a two-and-a-half-foot cane. If you passed him and he didn't think you were walking fast enough you got whacked with the cane on the backside. He was very aggressive ... The French teacher stood out because he was so proud of his cane. He had a name for it, 'Pierre'. The staff were a law unto themselves.²⁴⁴

'The staff were a law unto themselves.'

James Flett's aggression was well known amongst pupils, and they understood he was banned from using the tawse after he broke a boy's wrists in the course of doing so. He also inflicted simultaneous emotional abuse, telling boys they were stupid whilst kicking their shins.

241 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.14, paragraph 49.

242 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, paragraphs 47-8.

243 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, paragraph 62.

244 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947-51), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.25-27.

Some of these boys were dyslexic and 'Robert' understood that they could not read.²⁴⁵

As 'Robert' explained, James Flett was

OK to a point, and then on any given day he would run up and down in a tirade and pick on someone he thought was stupid, and pick them up by the hair and kick them in the shins. At the end of the day, he knew what he was doing.²⁴⁶

'Jack' heard that

Mr Flett was not allowed to give the belt because he had broken a boy's wrist some time earlier. I did not see the incident directly but that was something that was said at the time. I don't know whether that is true or not but he was certainly a teacher who didn't use the belt. Mr Flett was a very particular person who belonged to a particular religious sect. He was somebody who you would have a slightly uneasy feeling around during classes. He definitely had his likes and dislikes. It wouldn't be quite right to say that he verbally bullied boys but he definitely used to needle students in a particular way if he thought they weren't coming up with correct answers. It's hard to put your finger exactly on what he was like but there was a nasty way in which he spoke to boys. He would deal with things with condescension rather than encouragement or working with pupils to overcome their problems.²⁴⁷

As 'Cillian' explained, James Flett could suddenly become violent without warning:

Mr Flett used to grab people by the hair and shook them violently. He used to do it to one boy all the time. When I was a bit older, he accused me of talking and

came towards me to grab my hair. I was shocked because we had always got on OK. I jumped out of my seat and told him he wasn't doing that to me. He came after me and I ran, so the teacher left to tell the headmaster.²⁴⁸

'Mr Flett was not allowed to give the belt because he had broken a boy's wrist some time earlier.'

'Cillian' then had a meeting with the rector who told him that Mr Flett could not behave like that. Remarkably, there was, so far as 'Cillian' was aware, no follow-up with the teacher.

James Flett retired in 1974, at the same time as J.E.G. Quick, after 35 years at Morrison's. His departure was marked by a valedictory in *The Morrisonian* for the 1973-4 school year. It praised his academic ability and made reference to 'his uniquely distinctive personality'.²⁴⁹ It is not clear what that referred to, but what is clear is that his abusive behaviour is firmly lodged in the memories of those who encountered it almost half a century later. Given that James Flett's violent outbursts were well known amongst pupils, and the very real possibility that, at some point, he was reprimanded for injuring a boy when beating him with a tawse, the school must have been aware of the extent of the damaging physical abuse he inflicted on pupils or, at the very least, the risk of him doing so. Morrison's should have acted to protect children from James Flett years before he finally retired due to ill-health.

245 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.15-16.

246 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.17.

247 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.14, paragraph 50.

248 [Written statement of 'Cillian'](#) (former pupil, 1965-75), at WIT.001.002.3981, p.13, paragraph 80.

249 Morrison's Academy, school magazine: *The Morrisonian*, June 1974, p.8.



The Morrisonian, 1974

The maths teacher

Mr Scobie, a maths teacher (1960s), displayed violent and emotionally abusive behaviour.²⁵⁰

For 'Jack', he was

the one teacher who stands out to me as using corporal punishment during my early days in the senior school ... With the benefit of hindsight, I think he was an alcoholic ... He certainly was a grumpy bear in the mornings but at the same time he was a good teacher ... he knew how to engage with the pupils and had a broad knowledge of his subjects. In that way he was one of the better teachers who was there. Mr Scobie used a ruler instead of a belt. It was a particularly thick and heavy plastic ruler. When he used that it could be quite painful. Mr Scobie's use of corporal punishment seemed to be

determined by what mood he was in. He was inconsistent in how he used it and it was at indeterminate points throughout the school day ... There seemed to not be a great deal of correlation between the number of times he hit you and the nature of the indiscretion. I remember it being really sore when he hit you and it would leave a mark. It was redness rather than bruising. I am not aware of anyone sustaining any permanent injury or having to see a doctor as a result.²⁵¹

'Robert' witnessed Mr Scobie's violent outbursts:

In the maths class I spent a whole year waiting to be hit with a thick Perspex ruler from the teacher. He was an extremely violent teacher ... If you were thought to be lackadaisical, he would hit you on the back of the head with a ruler and say 'Waken up, laddie'. He took the ruler from a friend of mine. This was his first weapon of choice ... [He] would hit people on a daily basis, 24/7. I think there was one day when he didn't use the ruler and I thought there was something wrong with him.²⁵²

'Robert' also recalled Mr Scobie using the belt in class: 'He wasn't allowed to keep a belt in his desk drawer so the pupil had to go to the form head and ask for the belt and take it back to the maths teacher who would then beat you with it.'²⁵³ On one occasion, when 'Robert' was 11 years old, Mr Scobie 'cut my wrist with the belt for forgetting my homework. This was the first time I had experienced extreme violence.'²⁵⁴ 'Robert' told his mother and the head of the junior school, who had noticed the injury, about

250 Morrison's Academy was unable to find any records on Mr Scobie and it is therefore unclear what his first name was or when exactly he taught at the school.

251 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, pp.11-12, paragraphs 40-3.

252 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.15-17.

253 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.16-17.

254 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.16.

what had happened in class, but no action was taken.²⁵⁵

Given the severity of Mr Scobie's violence towards pupils, other staff must have been aware of his reputation, but nothing appears to have been done.

The inappropriate use of corporal punishment by a number of teachers should have been picked up and addressed by the school but plainly it was not. The culture of Morrison's during Mr Quick's rectorship was such that overt brutality occurred and teachers did not intervene. Morrison's failure to intervene, respond, and prevent further abuse was woeful.

Overt brutality occurred and teachers did not intervene.

Sexual abuse by teachers

Some teachers sexually abused children at Morrison's.

In the 1950s, a teacher of the younger pupils had a reputation for inappropriate sexual behaviour. As 'Bill' remembered:

He would ask pupils to remain behind after class, and one had to be smart as well as resilient to avoid his wandering hands ... Worryingly, the teacher also became a Cub master and, at one point, my class master. He had taken a liking to me. It made me feel a bit vulnerable but happily I successfully resisted any advances. Then quite suddenly he failed to return after a Christmas holiday. Word got about that the school had found out about his proclivities. We heard no more of him. That was quite a relief to me, I remember. I was about 10 years old.²⁵⁶

As happened at some of the other boarding schools included in the case study, discovery of sexual abuse led to the disappearance of the teacher without explanation. When allegations and knowledge of abuse emerged, teachers faced no consequences and were, instead, moved along – sometimes with good references. It is possible that this teacher was allowed to simply move onto another school where he was free to abuse again. In the absence of records, however, no firm conclusions can be reached.

There was a male teacher who used to touch girls inappropriately. 'Robert' knew about it happening because they told him: 'Girls of a certain age in the chemistry class had a male teacher who used to interfere with their underwear. The girls told me this on the bus home to Crieff.'²⁵⁷

In their section 21 response to the Inquiry, Morrison's reported that two former pupils had in the past made allegations of inappropriate touching by a maths teacher in the 1970s. One of these allegations was made in 2015, and the former pupil was offered support by the school. At the time, the former pupil chose not to take matters further.²⁵⁸ It is unclear when the other complaint was made.

Emotional abuse by teachers

Emotional abuse was common at Morrison's, and it often accompanied the physical abuse experienced by children. Teachers enjoyed taunting and punishing pupils, as 'Wallace' explained:

The staff used to take great delight in mocking you, for example if you couldn't pronounce a word or something like that. It didn't matter where you were in the

255 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.18.

256 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950–65), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.85–6.

257 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.17.

258 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, pp.44–8.

'The staff used to take great delight in mocking you.'

school, the beltings would take place. Other things would be getting a thump on the way back from the blackboard at the front of the class.²⁵⁹

Similarly, there was a PE teacher who was adept at making boys who did not excel at sport feel small, as 'Robert' explained:

There were some natural athletes, and the sports master paid more attention to them. He was a total waste of time. He just tried to belittle boys. He was sarcastic and tried to make you feel like shit. He wasn't as bad as the other teachers, like the French teacher or the maths teacher.²⁶⁰

'Jack' remembered the maths teacher singling out one particular boy:

Mr Scobie took his ... name as some sort of sign that the boy was a 'toff'. He made a point of calling [him] by his surname as opposed to his first name even though that was what he did with the rest of class. Mr Scobie definitely had a lower threshold when it came to using corporal punishment on [him] than any other boy in the class.²⁶¹

Emotional abuse can have as detrimental an effect as any other form of abuse. In some cases, it is worse. It causes distress, undermines confidence, and can have long-term impact. Emotional abuse experienced by children within the school setting at Morrison's had such an impact that former pupils still had a vivid awareness of it 50 years later. For example, 'John', who left the school in 1972, explained:

I think about Morrison's every day if not every second day. None of those memories are pleasant. I understand the problems it's made for me. There have been things that are always with me and things that have started creeping out in later life. The whole regime destroyed me emotionally, it destroyed my confidence, and it destroyed the way I relate to other people.²⁶²

Physical and emotional abuse by prefects

Although there was no evidence of inappropriate corporal punishment by the school prefects at Morrison's (as opposed to boarding house prefects), some recalled prefects physically abusing younger children within the school setting. 'Wallace' explained: 'If the prefects didn't like you, they would throw cricket balls at you when you came to the net. I was made to stand at the nets while they threw balls at me. I used to dodge them. The teachers didn't bother to get involved.'²⁶³ This was abusive behaviour, and it should have been stopped. It was physically abusive. Given the public nature of this abuse, it seems highly unlikely that staff would not have been aware of what was happening.

'If the prefects didn't like you, they would throw cricket balls at you when you came to the net.'

259 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947-51), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.27-8.

260 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.14.

261 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), WIT-1-000001018, p.12, paragraph 44.

262 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupils, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.26, paragraph 86.

263 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947-51), at TRN-8-000000016, p.27.

Prefects also inflicted emotional abuse through their imposition of written punishments. They set written tasks that were hard to do and had to be completed by unreasonable deadlines. 'John' described a written punishment task:

The essays could be 3,000 words long and on topics like 'shoelaces' or 'silence'. You would have to have the essay done by 8.00 am the following morning. If you got something wrong in the essay you might be given another 3,000-word essay to do ... Looking back, that system, and the way in which the teachers interacted with it, effectively condoned the way in which the prefects were behaving. Both the teachers and the headmaster must have known what was happening in that regard.²⁶⁴

If staff did not know, they should have done. Further, whilst I can accept that the rector may not have been aware of the details of the written punishments being set, it was his responsibility to establish and instil a culture in which punishments were fair and reasonable. Tasks of the type described by 'John' were neither fair nor reasonable.

Reporting of incidents in the school setting at Morrison's

A common theme in relation to all the abuse outlined above is that nothing was done to prevent or stop it. Against that background it is hardly surprising that witnesses did not speak of having any confidence that if they reported it, something would be done. The rector and other staff must - or ought to - have known about the abusive practices taking place within the school. However, they failed to intervene, failed to stop them happening, and failed to establish systems to protect children from being harmed. Even

allowing for the possibility that James Flett was stopped from belting pupils, that clearly did not stop him from abusing them by other means. In the case of Mr Scobie, injuries were seen by staff and complaints were made, but nothing happened.

'Jack' summed up the culture at Morrison's:

It was just the way it was and you had to get on with it. We all accepted what was going on and didn't feel that there was something that could be done about it. I don't recall anyone raising the issue. I personally didn't report what was happening during my time at Morrison's to anyone. There wasn't anyone within the school who I would have felt comfortable reporting things to. The headmaster, Mr Quick, was a distant person. I certainly wouldn't have approached him, or any other senior member of staff, to report what was happening. I don't think I would have had the courage to do that.²⁶⁵

This was a sad state of affairs and left children vulnerable to continuing abuse. Good, effective leadership and good governance were far from being in evidence. The picture of Morrison's that emerges during Mr Quick's headship includes that it was a school where a reputation for academic and sporting achievements was prioritised over the care and protection of its pupils. Nonetheless, upon Mr Quick's retirement in 1974, *The Morrisonian* magazine praised his devotion to the school, his years of hard work, the many crises a headmaster of such long service had to cope with, and his administrative abilities. It included the following praise of Mr Quick:

Past and present colleagues have always appreciated the Rector's concern for what he sincerely believed to be the real

264 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.15, paragraphs 53-4.

265 [Written statement of 'Jack'](#) (former pupil, 1957-70), at WIT-1-000001018, p.15, paragraph 53.

interest of his boys: they have realised their freedom to get on with their teaching, without interference – provided they adhered to the time-table; and above all they have come to know that his goal for the Academy is indeed their own. His conception of education is not a restricted one; he sees the school as a preparation for life in all its aspects, academic, social, and recreational; hence his intense interest in and remarkable knowledge of the vocational successes of his pupils, their social activities, and their sporting achievements. Bursary successes and academic and business distinction give him particular joy.²⁶⁶

This plainly confirms that supervision and control of teaching staff was inadequate. They were left to get on with their teaching without supervision, guidance, or correction, whether, it seems, from the head or from anyone else. All they had to do was adhere to the timetable they were given. Pastoral care did not feature on the rector's agenda of image and success. It seems clear to me that this situation facilitated and perpetuated an environment in which children were abused. The governors of his era must share responsibility for that failure and for allowing a culture of ignoring obvious abuse to take hold and run for decades; there is no evidence that they addressed the problem at all.

Response to the evidence of school abuse

The school had very little information about past school abuse given the paucity of its records and the passage of time. Nonetheless, Morrison's accepted that 'the accounts of ... applicants ... certainly furnished the school with a lot more detail,

and ... that personal experience ... has provided greater knowledge to the school!'²⁶⁷ While the focus of most of the evidence was on the abusive regimes within the boarding houses, there was, however, acceptance by Morrison's that governance, systems to address abuse, and systems to establish effective child protection were lacking across the board including in the school setting.²⁶⁸

Conclusions about abuse within the school

From 1945 to 1975, Morrison's was a school that allowed teachers free rein to discipline in a manner that often strayed into abuse, without apparent guidance or supervision. This was particularly the case under Mr Quick's rectorship, which ran from 1947 to 1974. The extent of those failings was such that there were teachers so much in the habit of beating children that they did so even where no misdemeanour had been committed and for no reason other than the anticipation of bad behaviour. That is extraordinary.

The regime allowed a small number of long-serving teachers to abuse pupils consistently without fear of consequences, even though their behaviour and reputations must have been widely known amongst staff, including senior leadership. The two teachers, of French and maths, who were mentioned repeatedly by applicants as having been abusers, may have been skilled teachers in terms of their abilities to educate children but they were not fit to work with them or be trusted to exercise power over them. Their longevity stemmed from a culture of non-intervention by a rector who was in place for decades, who just left teachers to get on with their job, and who cannot have

266 Morrison's Academy, school magazine: *The Morrisonian*, June 1974, p.7.

267 *Transcript*, day 215: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, pp.142–3.

268 *Transcript*, day 228: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.74–5.

been adequately supervised himself by the governors. Complacency and ill-founded assumption that all was well seems to have been the order of the day.

The change of headmaster in 1974 may have marked the beginning of a cultural shift, albeit without apparent success, as 'Cillian' explained:

Mr Quick retired and a new rector was appointed, and he made it very clear that there was to be no corporal punishment meted out by boys against other boys. But they were empty and hollow words. The culture within the boarding house

persisted, and it was perpetuated in my mind by the people in authority. So even though there had been this directive put out that boys weren't allowed to use the slipper, or whatever else was handy, to beat children with, that it continued, and it continued up until I left.²⁶⁹

'Cillian' left Morrison's in 1975. Changing a culture can, I accept, be a slow process. I also accept that the attempts made by Mr Quick's successor in 1974 to review the way the school was operating as a whole was a positive sign. But children continued to be at risk of abuse; change was urgently required.

269 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.27.

5

Abuse within the boarding houses

Introduction

Children resident in the boarding houses were physically and emotionally abused, including by housemasters. Some prefects and senior pupils engaged in abusive conduct towards other, often younger, children. Regular physical and emotional abuse became the established norm in some of the houses. Boarders quickly learned to expect random violence on a daily basis. On occasion, there was also sexual abuse, although it was not, it seems, widespread.

Life in the boarding houses was, for many, brutal. Boarders were abused by staff, by house prefects, and by older pupils. They would try to minimise their exposure to it by remaining at school for as long as possible at the end of the teaching day, because they felt safe there. 'Geoff' explained that Morrison's

was fairly strict, in the sense that good behaviour was expected at all times, but the culture in the school itself I remember being quite different from the culture in the boarding house ... I felt, particularly in my younger years, very threatened in the boarding house. I never felt safe, I would say it that way, either safe or comfortable in the boarding house. I never felt threatened in the school.²⁷⁰

It was abundantly clear that allocation to a particular house had a profound impact on

Morrison's boarders. Some of the boarding houses were nurturing and cared well for the children who were placed there. Other boarding houses were, for decades, frightening and violent places where adult supervision was inadequate or even non-existent. There was a wholly inappropriate delegation of authority to pupils without training or guidance and who were either emotionally unsuited to the task or had insufficient time to perform their roles. Bullying and brutality under the guise of discipline, and the physical abuse of juniors by older boys was often the norm. Such a culture of violence inevitably had profound emotional impact on children, some of which lasts to this day.

'Colin' described the boarding house as an 'abusive system' and 'almost like a prison. The boarding house was very much - not that I have ever been in prison, but what I would regard as incarceration in a boarding house.'²⁷¹

Lack of oversight

The rector of Morrison's Academy was, *ex officio*, warden of Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association (MABHA) and was therefore responsible for the oversight of boarding houses.²⁷² That oversight failed, however, to extend to pastoral care or child protection; it is clear from MABHA minutes that it concerned itself only with practical

270 Transcript, day 226: 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.63.

271 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.41-2.

272 Morrison's Academy, Parts A and B response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0003, p.9.

‘It was a bullying culture and they did nothing to prevent the unfair way we were being treated.’

matters.²⁷³ As a result of prioritising reputation, ill-founded assumptions that all was well in the boarding houses, and the absence of any system of child protection, Morrison’s failed to identify or address the dreadful abuse that was prevalent in some of the boarding houses. If there was any system of child protection – and it is not apparent that there was – it was not effective. That state of affairs was hard to shift, and vestiges of it remained even into the 1990s.

Inspections, whether internal or by outside agencies, were lacking. ‘Angus’, a pupil during the Quick era, said:

There were absolutely no inspections of the boarding house. In retrospect, I do wonder why the rector, deputy head or governors didn’t take an interest. I would have thought that the rector had overall responsibility and would have seen it as part of that responsibility to know how the boarders were doing. One way of doing that would have been to get down and dirty and appear in the boarding house from time to time. As far as I was aware, there was no external scrutiny.²⁷⁴

‘Lewis’, who left the school in the early 1980s, could not accept that staff were unaware of the ongoing abuse and made the significant point that it had an adverse effect not only on those who directly experienced it, but also on those who witnessed it:

I don’t think the teachers, housemasters, or staff took part in physical abuse whilst I was at Morrison’s but they must have

known it was going on [the abuse meted out by prefects or by older children] because it was just so obvious, and wasn’t hidden behind closed doors. All of the management team, the laundry staff, and the cleaners were all milling about and would pass by, walk through a corridor or a common room and must have seen it. They maybe just hadn’t given it too much thought about what impact it was having because it wasn’t just about the physical side of getting hit by something or someone. I suspect what they didn’t have in their heads was the impact psychologically on 40 or 50 kids who were on the receiving end or expecting to be on the receiving end of that. I don’t think they were part of it but I don’t think they thought through enough the effect of fear on kids in their care who witnessed the others being treated harshly. It was a bullying culture and they did nothing to prevent the unfair way we were being treated.²⁷⁵

Even between 1996 and 2001, according to Gareth Edwards, the then rector, there was simply no scope for an unannounced visit or inspection because a particular protocol had to be followed:

Only boarding house staff and boarding students had direct access into residential areas. Senior staff, notably the deputy rector and the bursar, would be frequent visitors to the residences in the course of their duties, but were required to report to house staff on arrival, often phoning

273 Morrison’s Academy, Minutes of Boarding Houses Association meeting, 1964, at MOR-000000014.

274 *Written statement of ‘Angus’* (former pupil, 1967–74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.9, paragraph 38.

275 *Written statement of ‘Lewis’* (former pupil, 1977–82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.17, paragraph 80.

ahead. This protocol was followed by me when I visited the houses.²⁷⁶

By that stage, there was a growing awareness of the need to appoint staff who were suitable to be responsible for the care of children. As Gareth Edwards accepted:

Latterly, in response to professional guidance, referees were asked to comment specifically on the fitness of a candidate to work with children. On some occasions I would follow up a written reference with a phone call to clarify a point or seek further comment. This was more common in instances where I knew the referee personally.²⁷⁷

Prior to that, however, the focus of the recruitment process was very different. Gareth Warren had examined documents from 1945 to the 1970s which demonstrated that, while the recruitment process for teachers – who were to be appointed as housemasters and housemistresses for the boarding houses – was rigorous, the focus was entirely on educational qualifications and ‘the character of an individual and whether they were well-suited to being a teacher in the school’ rather than on the welfare and protection of the children for whose care they would be responsible.²⁷⁸ That approach by Morrison’s was misconceived. The quality and character of the leadership of the boarding houses was of critical importance. Failing to get that right contributed to the degree of abuse suffered by pupils over decades. Some houses were blighted by leaders who were simply unfit to look after children and who should never

have been appointed to those roles. The blight was compounded by the absence of any effective or appropriate systems of oversight, supervision, or guidance.

Also, the culture was such that other house staff would not and did not report and deal with what must have been obvious; that was an extension of those failings. I have no doubt that that culture served to further embed the ‘out of sight, out of mind’ approach to the boarding houses that was adopted by heads for many years.

The same is true with the associated appointment of prefects by those in charge of houses. It was often ill-considered and seems to have focused on having enforcers who would allow housemasters or housemistresses to run their houses remotely.

Many themes were common across the boarding houses, but the most consistent abuse appears to have taken place in the three main boys’ houses which will be considered in turn.

Dalmhor House

The evidence from a number of applicants, all compelling and credible, confirmed that Dalmhor had a fearsome reputation throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s.²⁷⁹ The abuse they spoke to was closely linked to the inadequacies of the housemasters of that period, and the lack of oversight by the school. Bullying of junior pupils by seniors was rife, and excessive abusive corporal punishment by both housemasters and prefects was routine.

276 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.141.

277 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.139.

278 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, pp.115–16.

279 Bullying by three boys at Dalmhor is referred to in a memo, dated May 1980, from the then rector, who asked for more details, but that is one of the few documents available. See Morrison’s Academy, Academy House Correspondence, 1979–80, at MOR-000000040, p.4.

Dalmhor was a house in which initiation ceremonies were commonplace and gave a sense of what was to follow. 'George', an overseas pupil in the late 1960s, still remembered his introduction to the house. He was aged 12:

My first memory was the very first night's arrival at the boarding house. It was a tradition to dunk the new arrivals in a bath of cold water, fully clothed, on the first night. I was in abject terror of this happening to me as I waited my turn and thankfully a prefect took pity on me and had me spared this horror.²⁸⁰

It seems likely that the same or similar initiations were occurring in Dalmhor a decade later. 'Anna', a pupil in Croftweit, remembered a conversation with her housemistress in 1979, after she and her fellow boarders had suggested Croftweit should be more like Dalmhor:

She [the housemistress] said, 'Do you really think it's appropriate some of the things that go on in that house?' When we asked what she meant she said, 'Would you be happy if I let initiation ceremonies happen when, if you're new to the house, you lie in the bath and the older boys pee on you. Do you think that it's right that the school lets that carry on, knowing that it's going on?'²⁸¹

'Anna' continued:

I never heard that first hand from any boy that it happened to ... but I don't think the housemistress had any reason to make that up. Where she heard it from I don't know and I don't know if it was something that had happened years before or if it

was still happening. I didn't hear any other stories about initiations of new pupils and none happened later on when I was older.²⁸²

Whether initiation ceremonies were still taking place in the late 1970s or not, it is striking that staff were aware of such practices, and that no action seems to have been taken to put a stop to them.

From the evidence there is no doubt that abusive behaviour persisted into the 1970s in Dalmhor, which only confirms the inadequate control and supervision at all levels of management. 'Colin' experienced two housemasters. The first, Mr A.P. McIntyre, beat pupils brutally: 'being an athletic PE teacher, [he] really put his - he was really swinging, really thumping people. And it was a public beating; it would happen in the common room, in the prep room, in front of everybody else. You know, down, down, down, thwack, thwack, thwack.'²⁸³ His written punishments were also excessive. 'Colin' was punished for splashing water when he was about eight years old by having to learn a lengthy nonsense poem within six weeks. It was far too much to expect of a child of his age and, moreover, the prolongation of the task over many weeks felt like having the prospect of an exam hanging over him.²⁸⁴

The following housemaster, Mr MacLennan, a language teacher who took over in 1962, was no better, being both severe in character and content to abdicate all responsibility for the day-to-day running of the house to the prefects. That combination was catastrophic in effect; it allowed abuse to run unchecked. As 'Colin' stated: 'The seniors were the law,

280 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, p.63.

281 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.17, paragraph 74.

282 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.17, paragraph 75.

283 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.34.

284 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.30.

'I used to get battered because I would flinch and stutter.'

effectively. They were the immediate law ... [Mr MacLennan] wasn't there ... he was in a remote part of the building.'²⁸⁵

Beatings by prefects were common and a variety of implements were used including gym shoes, coat hangers, canes, and, in one case, a military swagger stick. 'Colin' remembered its use in particular because of the injuries it caused another pupil following a trivial offence (talking after lights out): 'he was a young - a small lad, and after it had happened we could see these stripes across his backside. It was really quite physical.'²⁸⁶ He continued:

Of course there is no padding - some boys would have tried - if they knew they were about to be beaten, whether it was with a gym shoe, what we call a trainer today, but gym shoes were the weapon of choice, if you like, generally, but some people tried to stuff their bottom with a hanky or something like that. Of course that was always found and, if that happened, then there was another couple of beatings. Instead of the four you would get six or something like that ... I don't think it ever exceeded six as far as I can remember ... They were public inasmuch as we had nowhere else to go.'²⁸⁷

'Colin's' impression was that the abuse by prefects reduced as boys got older. Eventually, he became a prefect in turn and his year group, to their credit, learned from their experiences. 'Yes, it ameliorated.

The whole physical abuse side of things decreased and decreased.'²⁸⁸ That was not, however, because of any input from the housemaster, as applicants from subsequent years confirmed.

'Thompson' described life in Dalmhor this way:

The housemaster, house prefects and school prefects all had the authority to give out beatings, so when the housemaster was away the prefects gave out the beatings hundreds of times. It happened all the time, and you just got used to it. The prefects were only meant to give a maximum of three strikes on your backside, and they did it with a wooden drumstick. What the prefects did, though, so they could give more than three strikes, was to try and hit you on the exact same spot on your backside that they had just hit so they didn't make more than three marks. I used to get battered because I would flinch and stutter. It happened all the time from big people. You got beaten for any reason at Morrison's.'²⁸⁹

'Thompson' experienced shocking violence, and possibly sexual abuse, at the hands of the boy for whom he 'fagged':

He was 17, a fully grown man and a big rugby player and a bully. I was so scared of him I used to wet myself when he came into the prep room. When he came in, I was always thinking 'Not me, not me', and I am sure everybody else was thinking the same. It was always me, though, because

285 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.32.

286 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.33.

287 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.33-4.

288 Transcript, day 226: 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.41.

289 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.75.

'The boarding house was a loveless, cold place where you were frightened of telling a joke or laughing.'

I was the smallest. He would grab me by the arm with one arm and the thigh with another arm and then he lifted me up in the air. I didn't know what he was doing to start with, I wasn't that clued up. But his fingers would move up under my shorts. I would fold up because I thought he was going to feel my pissy pants and I would then get six of the cane or drumstick, and then I would fall on the floor. He would give me a kick and that would be the end of it. That was in the prep room in front of all the other boys. He did that to me most of the time but sometimes to other small boys.²⁹⁰

He was also beaten by another prefect who had spotted him playing a trick on a friend – he had put salt in his friend's tea. He was told to prepare himself for

a four after supper. That meant four strikes with a drumstick. I went along to the bathroom and got my punishment but he then told me to drop my pants. I had an extra two pairs of PE shorts on underneath, as I had genuinely prepared myself, but he then told me to take them off and prepare for a six, so ten strikes in total on my bare arse. There were other prefects there but it was the same old, same old for them. No one was going to say anything. That kind of thing just happened all of the time. I was then left in the bathroom and I was preparing to have my bath as it was my bath day when the matron walked into the bathroom. She initially thought I had defecated myself and called me a disgusting urchin, but when she came

closer she saw it was blood on my backside and that it had come from the ten strikes across my backside.²⁹¹

It is a damning indictment of the mismanagement, lack of appropriate house leadership, and lack of school oversight that this went unreported and was not acted upon. Instead, the abuse persisted.

Iain Leighton described his time at Dalmhor between 1963 and 1967 as 'the bad years'.²⁹² He described what life at Dalmhor during that period was like:

The boarding house was a loveless, cold place where you were frightened of telling a joke or laughing because it would be frowned on by the housemaster. You couldn't laugh, especially on a Sunday. Many of the teachers had nicknames but he didn't have a nickname. In 1966 my parents had come home again. They came home every three years. They were coming to pick me up for a weekend shortly before my birthday. Tea invariably involved copious amounts of baked beans. You know what boys are like ... During the evening prayers someone let rip and it was horrendous. I went into hysterical laughter and couldn't stop but I wasn't the perpetrator of the fart. The housemaster pulled me out by the scruff of my neck, called me a filthy boy, and said I had been a disgrace. I was 14 at this time but I was really thrashed. At that age I was allowed to keep my underpants on. I had to bend over and he gave me six very forceful whacks on my bottom with

290 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.76.

291 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.77-8.

292 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.116.

his leather slipper. One whack is enough. That happened in his study downstairs and to this day it is spoken about by my friends from school. They remember it very clearly. No one owned up to having done the deed but I took the blame. It was a ridiculous situation and I can smile about it now, but it has a sting in its tail and that was the thrashing. The exeat for my birthday was cancelled and my parents received a letter a week before my birthday saying I couldn't be allowed out and that I was a disgrace to myself, the boarding house, and the school for the outrageous behaviour on my part. I will never forgive them for that because it was so cruel.²⁹³

Iain's family lived in Hong Kong, and he saw them infrequently. The cruelty displayed by the housemaster was shameful.

Mr MacLennan beat boys regularly although less physically, it seems, than his predecessor. While he used a belt in his classroom, in the house he preferred to use the slipper. Iain Leighton could still

visualise him polishing up these red slippers. It was quite a weapon and the use of it brought tears to your eyes ... There was a rule that we were not allowed to talk after lights out and the housemaster loved coming upstairs on tiptoe and listening at the doors after lights out. The door would fling open, and he would ask who was talking. He would say if no one came forward we would all be beaten. We had a code of honour that said if you were caught, then you admitted it was you, and you were taken downstairs. In my case that happened five or six times because I am quite a chatterbox.²⁹⁴

The housemaster's wife, whom Iain Leighton liked, and who acted as matron, was afraid of her husband:

I met ... [her] ... four years ago. She confided in me she had been very unhappy at Dalmhor. She had been frightened of her husband. She said she was aware of a lot that went on. She told me she would have loved to have stepped in and intervened but she couldn't ... I tried to get from her why her husband was as he was. She said he was an only child and his father was a senior minister in ... the Wee Frees ... The housemaster's father beat him every day to drum into his son the rules ... [h]e was to read at least an hour from the Bible every day. The father was very strict with the son's upbringing. In those days, if a son received a beating from his father then he was going to do that to his own son. As far as the housemaster was concerned, he would do the same to us, to instil in us the fundamental principles of righteousness and goodness. Kindness didn't enter his world but abiding with rules was paramount to him. If you broke those rules then it was a sin ... To suffer from incontinence and bed-wetting was unforgivable ... that made me understand his behaviour as a housemaster.²⁹⁵

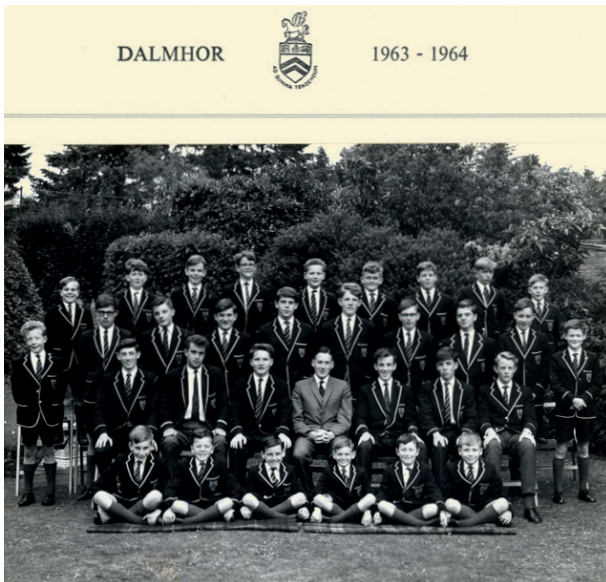
However much that may explain his conduct, it cannot excuse it. Nor can it excuse Morrison's culpability for allowing such a man to be responsible for the care of children. The regime at Dalmhor was known about by other staff, and yet Mr MacLennan remained in post for years. Unsuitable and unfit for that task, he should never have been appointed and should never have been retained in post.

293 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.110-12.

294 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.112-13.

295 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.124-5.

'The behaviour of the prefects was encouraged by the housemaster.'



Dalmhor, 1964 with Mr MacLennan (centre) and Iain Leighton (back row, third from left)

That failure of management was exposed at the outset of Iain Leighton's time at Dalmhor when his own conduct resulted in a meeting with the headmaster. A 17-year-old prefect tried to bully Iain, as a new arrival aged 12:

What he didn't know was that I was quite a karate expert, having been taught ... in Hong Kong, and I laid into him. He was away for three weeks in hospital with damaged kidneys ... I was called to the headmaster and told what had happened was very serious, irrespective of me being attacked first.²⁹⁶

It is astonishing that, while the school could not ignore what had happened, no doubt because of the medical consequences, no effort was made to stop the bullying or even investigate it. Instead, it continued unchecked.

Iain Leighton was not always able to defend himself against the prefects. He recalled a terrifying experience on one occasion shortly after his arrival when

we all had to put our trunks in one of the outbuildings ... I was helping stack them one day. It was me and one of the prefects. He told me to get in the laundry basket for fun to see if I could fit in it. There were just the two of us there. I wondered why he wanted me to get in the laundry basket but he said, 'Just do it', so I did. He tied me in it and then ran off. I started screaming. An hour later someone heard me and came and undid the straps. It was awful ... I couldn't move inside it. I just remember panicking. At least I could breathe because the basket had slats but it was terribly frightening.²⁹⁷

Bullying by prefects was the norm and went unchecked given the absence of a responsible adult presence. If anything, Iain thought '[t]he behaviour of the prefects was encouraged by the housemaster because they were his eyes and ears. They fed him information about behaviour generally. He condoned their actions and they condoned his actions.'²⁹⁸

The results were shocking:

What often happened with older prefects was that you would all be in the common room and suddenly two prefects would decide to pick on someone. You would be told to stand up and one prefect would hit you on one arm, and the other on the

296 [Written statement of Iain Leighton](#) (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at WIT-1-000000681, p.26, paragraphs 110-11.

297 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.114.

298 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.109.

other arm, and you'd be asked who hit the hardest. You would be between a rock and a hard place and that was when the physical beatings would happen ... You were always fearful you were going to be hit, especially by one of the older prefects. Someone was going to come up and bully you.²⁹⁹

'Lindsay' was in Dalmhor at the same time as Iain Leighton and had similar experiences:

I have a distinct memory of being outside the prefects' room inside the boarding house. I was quite small and I was surrounded by four or five prefects. One would hit you and then another would hit you. They would play a game of who could hit the hardest. They would ask you which of them hit you the hardest. You can't win that game. If you said, 'He hit the hardest', then another one would hit you even harder. It was a game to them and boys would be called into the prefects' room so they could play this game. This happened on a pretty regular basis and I remember it happening mainly on Sundays.³⁰⁰

'I was surrounded by four or five prefects. They would play a game of who could hit the hardest.'

Beatings by prefects were very common if a boy had dirty shoes, as 'Lindsay' explained:

When you came downstairs for breakfast, into the main hall, if your shoes were on the table that meant you hadn't cleaned your shoes properly. You would go and turn the shoes over to check the number

on the bottom, hoping that you didn't see your number on the shoes. If it was your number, you knew you were going to be beaten after breakfast. You would be beaten on your bottom with an officers' cane, a cricket stump or a normal cane. The sorest thing was the officers' cane as it had two metal tips on the end of it. If you were beaten with that, it would break the skin and you would have blood on your pants. It was very cruel. I spent a lot of time trying to protect my little brother. If I found my little brother's shoes out in the hall, I would take them away and clean them again and put them back. I was able to protect him a little bit.³⁰¹

This was systemic abuse designed to instil fear into the younger boys.

Life improved for 'Lindsay' as he got older, but he still cannot understand why the abusive culture was allowed to persist: 'To this day, I've never understood why the House Masters didn't do more about what went on. They must have known that some of the boys they put in charge were behaving inappropriately.'³⁰² I agree - housemasters must have known what was going on and if they did not, they certainly ought to have done; they owed a duty to the children for whom they were responsible to put a stop to such behaviour - instead, it seems that housemasters often condoned prefects' abusive conduct.

'Geoff', who lived through the same period as 'Lindsay' and Iain Leighton at Dalmhor, also lived in fear particularly because of older boys terrorising the younger ones when prefects were absent: 'it was the 13- to 16-year-old boys who caused the greatest

299 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.116-17.

300 [Written statement of 'Lindsay'](#) (former pupil, 1963-70), at WIT-1-000000957, p.8, paragraph 28.

301 [Written statement of 'Lindsay'](#) (former pupil, 1963-70), at WIT-1-000000957, p.8, paragraph 27.

302 [Written statement of 'Lindsay'](#) (former pupil, 1963-70), at WIT-1-000000957, p.9, paragraph 30.

'At the boarding house the housemaster was an enthusiastic psychopath.'

trouble to the younger boys, the eight to 10 year olds'.³⁰³ He went on:

There was a culture of bullying in the boarding house. I have no awareness of any sexual advances but there was widespread and overt bullying and physical thuggery. In my early years I lived in a constant state of fear although this changed after two or three years as I grew older ... The biggest troublemakers were the younger teenagers, aged 14 to 16, who wanted to climb the pecking order ... They would hang around the common room just inside the door and ambush younger boys as they passed.³⁰⁴

The prefects would be absent, partly because of practical constraints. 'Geoff' explained: 'I think there were only three prefects in a house of that size ... So if one of the prefects was out at sports, and one might be studying up in the senior common quiet room, there was often no house captain or prefect presence in the main common room.'³⁰⁵ That is, there was a complete absence of supervision.

Interestingly, 'Geoff's' brother had been in Dalmhor between 1953 and 1963. He had experienced the same 'physical thuggery' and had tried, as a senior, to put a stop to it. 'Geoff' explained that 'it clearly had come back by the time I started at the school'.³⁰⁶

Mr MacLennan ceased to be housemaster in 1969, and A.P. McIntyre was reinstated

in the post. Iain Leighton and 'Lindsay' remembered life improving with the return of A.P. McIntyre. Iain recalled: 'The change of housemaster was hugely beneficial. He was a different character with a different nature. He had a lovely wife who was approachable ... When [Mr MacLennan] left the school, the boarding house suddenly lightened up. The day he left we were so happy.'³⁰⁷ Similarly, 'Lindsay' recalled life at Dalmhor 'being a lot less vicious'.³⁰⁸ At the same time, both boys were getting older and, as a result, the abuse they had experienced when younger diminished.

However, the improvements seen by Iain Leighton and 'Lindsay' did not last. Physical and emotional abuse took place under A.P. McIntyre. 'George', an overseas boarder at Dalmhor in the early 1970s, stated:

I can attest to rampant institutionalised physical and emotional abuse ... At the boarding house the housemaster was an enthusiastic psychopath who took every opportunity to torture his charges with physical and emotional abuse and authorised the prefects to inflict punishment on the lower forms but only with a gym shoe. The leather strap was his pride and joy and only himself was permitted to use this device. There were no limits on what one could be punished for, nor any limits on the amount or duration of that punishment. I remember with some pride the one time I was given

303 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.80.

304 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.80-1.

305 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.82.

306 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, pp.61-82.

307 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.113-14.

308 [Written statement of 'Lindsay'](#) (former pupil, 1963-70), at WIT-1-000000957, p.9, paragraph 31.

the gym shoe by the housemaster when I was in the third form and I managed not to cry from the obvious pain ... He was, in my mind, singularly unsuitable for the roles of either a teacher or a housemaster at Morrison's ... Back then I guess it was considered acceptable and probably encouraged.³⁰⁹

Unlike his predecessor, Mr McIntyre was routinely present. 'George' described how the emotional abuse of boys became part of the routine. At mealtimes

he would use the time to stalk the tables and identify boys whose hair did not meet with his approval ... so any child with hair that he considered too long would be given a cuff on the back of the neck with a cry 'Haircut!' following. That was every meal - breakfast, lunch, and dinner - and the evenings too when we all sat in the common room to do our homework. He wore heavy brogue shoes and would stalk the boarding house every evening, walking up and down the stairs and into our dormitories looking for boys to inflict punishment on, with the instruction 'Come to my study in the morning, boy' ... One of his favourite events was giving you your weekly allowance on a Saturday morning in his study. He would take four boys at a time in this ritual. You were invited to stand at the far wall, and he would then come to the front of his desk, clutching your £1 note in his hand. The notes were then dropped at his feet with the instruction that if it hit the carpet, the money was his. This was money that our parents gave to the school for our pocket money, and although he never actually confiscated the notes that landed on the

carpet, I believe he thoroughly enjoyed the humiliation of us on all fours collecting our money at his feet. This was nearly every week for five years.³¹⁰

The culture also became more vicious. 'George' remembered random acts of violence by prefects, including being hit on one occasion without warning with a heavy wooden T-square in the study room. He went on:

The only way to avoid the attention of the headmaster and the prefects was quite simply to keep out of sight and to avoid bringing attention to oneself. The regime was quite strict ... Any deviation or failure attracted the attention of the prefects who would either apply the gym shoe or some other form of punishment, like a week's worth of fagging for that prefect ... It was the housemaster who chose the prefects to run the boarding house discipline on his behalf. I have no idea what principles he used but it is probably safe to say that he picked boys that matched his own personality ... The set-up, such as having a fag for the prefects, and being in abject terror of them and the housemaster, would have silenced any complaints.³¹¹

I accept all these accounts as true and accurate. They are damning. Children were unable to report the abuse, but it seems clear that staff knew, just like the pupils, that Dalmhor House was mismanaged and was a real problem. Yet those ultimately responsible for the care of the children - the headmaster and the school governors - did not act. It is not possible to know exactly why. Concern for the school's reputation, disinterest, assumption that the status quo, being unchanged for so long, must be

309 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.63-5.

310 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.65-6.

311 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'George' (former pupil, 1969-74), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.66-7.

‘my recollection is that the seniors appeared to enjoy meting out the punishment’

acceptable, an aversion to change, and wilful blindness all seem likely to have played a part. Further, in the other two large boys’ boarding houses things were no better. The very same issues arose, and were at times ignored, for, in all likelihood, the same or similar reasons.

Glenearn

Two applicants provided clear and credible evidence of abuse occurring in Glenearn house between the 1960s and the early 1980s. Once again, the character of the housemaster mattered.

‘Cillian’ experienced three housemasters. His time as a junior under the first housemaster was dreadful; the second did not last because of the behaviour of the pupils towards him and his wife; and the third was more positive and pragmatic, even allowing the boys a room in which to smoke. ‘Cillian’ had come to Morrison’s with high hopes, but there was no induction or mentoring, and his youthful optimism was dashed on his first morning:

The breakfast gong went, and the 12 of us took off down the corridor ... We got halfway down the corridor when there was this almighty bellow from behind us, and it was one of the senior boys, a prefect, telling us that we weren’t to run ... and, because we had, we were all given lines to do, which was, for me, quite a shock to the system. This was not what I was expecting. This wasn’t the convivial environment that I thought I was going to be living in, the fantasy that I had created in my head about what my experiences would be like.³¹²

The boys were punished for having run down the corridor that first morning; they were given lines. Some of the boys did not complete the lines quickly enough and the result was the next level of prefect discipline which was being beaten with a slipper or gym shoe. ‘Cillian’ explained:

‘Slaps’ would be too mild a description. It wasn’t a whipping. But it hurt, and my recollection is that the seniors appeared to enjoy meting out the punishment. And if after being hit the first time across the buttocks you ... would tend to straighten up, and if, and usually out of fear, you were reluctant to bend over again for the second slap, your head would be held between the thighs of another senior boy to keep you in the position necessary for the punisher to deliver the punishment ... Now, these beatings were so frequent that to isolate them incident by incident would be almost impossible. It seemed to be an ongoing experience of being ... a youngster in a boarding house ... Up until I was about 13 or 14, my buttocks were always bruised, and there was never enough time for the bruising to clear before the next beating except for the eight-week summer holidays.³¹³

Like Dalmhor under MacLennan, the culture at Glenearn under the first housemaster ‘Cillian’ encountered was one of violence, with distant or non-existent supervision, which allowed senior boys to abuse juniors without restraint:

The house captain and prefects were given the authority by the institution

312 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.17.

313 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.18–19.

through the headmaster. There were no guidelines and no boundaries. There was no requirement to document or report any punishment that had been meted out to any individual ... There was no oversight ... We would only see the housemaster and the tutor at mealtimes, or if he wanted to ... see any one of us specifically about a particular matter. But if it was a matter that required management in some way, as in a curtailment of a particular behaviour, then that would be communicated by the housemaster to the senior boys ... [who] would take on the role of – ‘investigators’ would be too kind [a] word – interrogators, and subsequent arbiters of whether or not whatever your crime was warranted a punishment.³¹⁴

Again, as in Dalmhor, fear and emotional abuse were the norm in Glenearn. ‘Cillian’ was nicknamed the ‘Biafran’³¹⁵ because he was small and thin and ‘that very quickly became the name that I was referred to’.³¹⁶ He described trying to be invisible:

If a senior boy came into the room I would immediately hide in a corner under a bench ... in an effort not to be seen. Because my fear was that if I was seen, then the consequences were I was going to be punished. So the fear of punishment and – or, one, the prevalence but, two, the fear of it taking place just scared me witless. I really thought that if I could curl up in a ball and hide somewhere out of sight that I wouldn’t be seen. That is how naive I was.³¹⁷

‘Cillian’ had no respite from the abuse: ‘Going to bed didn’t necessarily mean the

end of the abuse, be it physical, sexual, or emotional. I would think through it all again when I woke up. I was in a constant state of fear and hypervigilance.’³¹⁸ He also had no doubt that the housemaster was fully aware of what was going on.

‘I was in a constant state of fear and hypervigilance.’

In his senior years, ‘Cillian’ tried to prevent corporal punishment from being used in Glenearn. However, the third housemaster continued to delegate beatings to prefects. ‘Cillian’ stated:

It was always the last resort, and it was never more than three of the slipper, and ... I didn’t mete out the punishment with gusto, it was more of a ... letting it be seen that I was dealing with it in what was considered, at one time, to be an acceptable and authoritative way.³¹⁹

The change he remembered was the appointment, in 1974, of J.E.G. Quick’s successor, D.R. Johnston-Jones. He wanted to stop corporal punishment of boys by boys. Unfortunately, it had no effect and

[the] culture within the boarding house persisted, and it was perpetuated in my mind by the people in authority. So even though there had been this directive put out that boys weren’t allowed to use the slipper ... it continued up until I left ... What happened after I left, I’m not sure, but I would suspect that very little changed.³²⁰

314 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.21–2.

315 The term ‘Biafran’ refers to children being very thin from starvation caused by military blockades by Nigeria towards the short-lived secessionist state Biafra, which split from Nigeria in the late 1960s.

316 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.21.

317 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.33.

318 [Written statement of ‘Cillian’](#) (former pupil, 1967–75), at WIT.001.002.3981. p.11, paragraph 62.

319 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.26.

320 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.27.

'Gregor', who lived at Glenearn from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, confirmed that there was little change in the immediate period after 'Cillian' left Glenearn. Discipline in the boarding house was predominantly carried out by the prefects without supervision by the housemaster. They used a slipper on the backsides of younger boys as a physical punishment. They also gave out lines.³²¹ However, by the time 'Gregor' became a prefect in the 1980s, there were signs of positive change and physical punishment had been almost fully eradicated, though it was occasionally still in use without adequate supervision and without being recorded: 'There was no punishment book as such, to write down who got slipped or how often.'³²²

What was of greater concern to 'Gregor' was the abuse of younger boys by older boys - 'who didn't have full power yet'³²³ - and who had nothing to do at times of the day when there was inadequate supervision by anyone, such as when prefects were revising for exams or against a background of staff being remote and disengaged:

The times of day where things happened to you were the periods after school but before dinner and after prep. It would be life in a 'Lord of the Flies' type manner. There was no adult supervision around at that time. There were boys who were bored and looking for entertainment or scores to be settled. You were meant to be cleaning shoes, or getting kit ready for the next day. There were a lot of after-school activities, especially when you were older, so you weren't always back at the boarding house between 3.30 p.m. and

5.00 p.m. If you avoided the boarding house at that time, you avoided being abused.³²⁴

The gap in the timetable must have been apparent, and staff must have been all too aware of the risks of leaving children to be wholly unsupervised, particularly within a system that gave older boys power over younger ones.

The abuse 'Gregor' experienced and witnessed was physical:

Your left arm would be held and it would be twisted. It would be punched from the side, almost from the underside, but it would be the twisting of your arm that meant you couldn't go away. The bruising would be on the underside of your upper arm. If there was any punching or hitting to be done, that was the general way of doing it. This was done by older boys to younger boys. It happened frequently when I was younger.³²⁵

During his junior years, 'Gregor' was passive and did not resist. That made matters worse. The older boys would

get younger boys to hit me, just to see what my breaking point was I suppose. Then the older boys would hit you if you hit back. It became a Catch 22 situation, you were going to get hit whatever either way, so was it better to have a younger boy hitting you or an older boy hitting you? I suppose it was a dominance thing ... Once one has that reputation, the victim mentality doesn't go away. I would leave at the end of term in the summer and hope that it would be better when I

321 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.25, paragraph 121.

322 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.26, paragraphs 128-9.

323 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.29, paragraph 140.

324 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.27, paragraph 130.

325 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.27, paragraph 131.

returned the next year but it wouldn't be. That was what it was like through a lot of the junior years.³²⁶

'Gregor' commented that the common room for senior boys who were not prefects was a place of which he still has a clear memory. It was where he suffered an extraordinarily cruel form of physical abuse:

I remember being called in there and for someone's amusement being made to hit myself in the face with a book, a big encyclopaedia type book. I wasn't allowed to leave until I had made my nose bleed with the book ... That was as horrific as it sounds. There were several older boys in the room. One was the main instigator and the others were trying to tell him to stop.³²⁷

The abuse was also emotional. 'If you had some toy it would be taken and then put back, broken. So you didn't take anything precious or that you really cared about because the chances of it surviving would be slim.'³²⁸

There was also humiliation:

I was made to rub the tip of my penis on a door handle and then to lick the door handle. This was done by people two or three years older than me. The difficulty as a small boy was that I couldn't reach the door handle, I was having to stand on tip-toes. That was just humiliation. It was psychological - there was nothing physical about it. It wasn't sexual abuse, I don't think. It was just pure and simple for humiliation purposes. It was incredibly humiliating.³²⁹

And there was fear: 'the psychological fear of wondering when it was going to happen. However when it was happening all the time, there was no fear of when it was going to happen because it was going to happen.'³³⁰

The abuse continued outside the house, on the Sunday walks. Whilst those walks could be a source of enjoyment - such as Iain Leighton experienced - for 'Gregor' they simply served as another opportunity for older boys to abuse in the absence of any supervision. He recalled a game called 'hunt the punk', where one boy was nominated to be chased after a 10-second start. It was not playful. Rather, it was an opportunity to give a younger boy a kicking once caught: 'Their [the older boys'] idea was why just go for a walk when you can have some fun? It's a step up from little boys playing tig. It's "Lord of the Flies" really. I was frequently the prey in a lot of these games.'³³¹

Something that is striking about the account provided by 'Gregor' is that the bruising he suffered from such regular abuse was 'all over my body, it wasn't just my arms. It must have been noticeable. We had swimming once a week - it must have been noticeable there but nothing was said by the gym teachers.'³³² His inference is entirely reasonable. It certainly seems that a blind eye was turned by staff and the school was failing to establish proper care within the boarding houses so as to protect children from abuse.

'Lewis', another Glenearn boarder, had similar experiences to 'Gregor'. He described

326 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.27, paragraphs 132-3.

327 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.28, paragraph 134.

328 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.28, paragraph 135.

329 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.28, paragraph 136.

330 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.28, paragraph 137.

331 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, pp. 29-30, paragraphs 141-2.

332 Written statement of 'Gregor' (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p. 30, paragraph 143.

the culture as one where 'officially it was fatigues but unofficially it was violence'.³³³

'Lewis' spoke of prefects having

complete control of what they decided to do and there were no checks and balances applied ... Punishment violence was usually handed out there and then but sometimes boys would be told to go and report to the prefects that night at a specified time. There was violence from the senior pupils any time we had free time. The worst time was when the school was closed due to heavy snow and this usually happened a couple of times a year. Day pupils were sent home and we knew that that meant violence was coming ... It would all kick off because the system didn't allow for a whole three or four hours of downtime, so it had to be filled with something. The prefects would run locker checks and they would just run riot. They would pull everything out our lockers and that was the worst time. You just knew it was going to happen and sure enough it happened. There was usually a queue of people waiting to get hit with a slipper or some other form of violence administered by an 18 year old on a 12, 13 or 14 year old ... That was pretty lethal and it would be on your backside over your clothing in front of everybody else ... On the Sunday afternoon walks, the year four boys used to lead it. This was quite threatening and it used to worry me what was going to happen. There was a varying degree of violence meted out purely for their entertainment and for them to have fun by either hurting or scaring us.³³⁴

From his recollection this was much worse under his first housemaster, an English teacher who was fond of the belt. A new housemaster led to gradual change. That came as a slight surprise as the new incumbent was not a teacher but a retired serviceman. 'Lewis' had thought that he 'was another guy brought in to keep order and discipline ... It just so happened he and his wife were parents first and foremost who gradually tried to sort things in a culture they had inherited and it just evolved as they got used to the job.'³³⁵

The new housemaster introduced changes to prefects' appointments, and, within a year, the abuse had almost completely stopped:

Prefects would occasionally still mete out punishments in the form of 500-word essays but the violence stopped. There was still respect as there was still a hierarchy. They looked at it and managed it in a different way. They brought in fatigues as the punishment for people stepping out of line and this would be things like gardening or sweeping the tennis courts. I don't think it was a case that they got immediate instruction to get the system changed, more that it was a subtle change they introduced and selected a different type of character as their prefects. The type of guys he brought in latterly as prefects were more thoughtful ones and they were a million miles different from these big bears who were enforcers and ran rampage through the house.³³⁶

It is clear that the change in culture was instigated by a good housemaster, rather than directed by the school. In fact, it seems

333 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, p. 15, paragraph 70.

334 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, pp.18, 19, paragraphs 82-3, 85.

335 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.16, paragraph 75.

336 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, pp.15-16, paragraphs 71-2.

'[the house captain] heated a poker in the stove until red hot, then approached me menacingly until the poker was inches from my nose'

that Morrison's continued to exercise little oversight of the houses. As 'Lewis' said, 'I never saw the rector or a teacher ever in the boarding house. That just wasn't their domain.'³³⁷ 'Lewis' was fortunate to have a housemaster who understood the importance of pastoral care, who had the wit to recognise that there was a problem and addressed it by carefully selecting appropriate prefects and changing disciplinary practices. Many other children were not so fortunate.

Academy House

Academy House was Morrison's oldest boarding house. Abuse happened there and it was facilitated by the absence of supervision and appropriate management by rectors and governors.

Alasdair Liddle joined Academy House in September 1950, and was immediately exposed to a regime where fear, induced by brutality, was the established norm, and where the housemaster, Col. J.S. Baines, appointed a house captain who should not have been given any position of responsibility at all.

Within days of Alasdair's arrival, the house captain

announced a boxing match between the new boy, me, and [another boy], a competent boxer – or fighter. I was young, shy, inexperienced, and completely lost in this unfamiliar environment. Moments

later one of my front incisors was punched out. I held it in place until promptly seeing the local dentist, who drilled out the contents and then filled the tooth. Unfortunately it remained darker than the others until a decade ago.³³⁸

That was only the start of the house captain's abuse. Alasdair recalled how that same year

during Prep, [the house captain] heated a poker in the stove until red hot, then approached me menacingly until the poker was inches from my nose. As I tried to ignore him, which clearly infuriated him, he removed one of his slippers, took out the filthy, smelly insole and ordered 'Eat that or I will brand you' ... The other prefects and senior pupils did nothing to help me, and with this red hot poker inches from my nose, I tossed this disgusting object into my mouth and swallowed it ... On another occasion, when out for the routine Sunday walk, [the house captain], smoking as he did regularly, came up behind me and stubbed out his burning cigarette on the back of my leg, beneath the kilt. An excruciating sore, then scar, remained with me for a very long time after. Finally, shortly before he left, he demanded a penknife from me ... given to me by my parents as a gift when I left home for Morrison's. The penknife was embossed with a list of British Kings, Queens and relevant dates. [The house captain] demanded it from me as he was taking

337 Written statement of 'Lewis' (former pupil, 1977–82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.16, paragraph 76.

338 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; Transcript, day 225: read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950–c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, p.86.

his history exam that day ... he never did return it to me.³³⁹

The impact of such abuse has been lifelong and Alasdair has had 'a burning hatred for [the house captain] for almost 70 years'.³⁴⁰ However, what saddened him most was 'the total absence of help from the prefects and my senior colleagues. I assume that they were all too terrified of [the house captain]'.³⁴¹

He learned from his experience and when he became house captain, he 'hopefully treated the rest of the pupils decently'.³⁴² That is to his credit, but it is a lesson he should never have had to learn in the way he did and displays dreadful failures of oversight at all levels of Morrison's management.

However much Alasdair's influence improved life for the boys of Academy House, it was not a permanent change. Two applicants spoke to life there in the late 1960s to mid-1970s in negative terms. 'Angus' said 'it had the reputation for being the toughest house'³⁴³ which, given the dreadful abuse suffered by others in Dalmhor and Glenearn in the same period, may seem surprising but it appears that Academy House was possibly even worse than those two houses at that time.

'Angus', a pupil between 1967 and 1974, was in Academy House. His experiences were also characterised by fear and prefects' beatings:

The general thing that junior boys lived in fear of was being beaten for something by a prefect. Even more disconcerting was the fact that the beatings might take place after lights out. Dormitory four contained junior boys and some primary school boys. If the prefects decided to carry out an inspection of shoes or rugby lockers, they might decide that a boy's shoes were filthy and go up to the dormitory and beat him. It was never one prefect. It was always two or more who would turn up. It was for the spectacle rather than the exercise of discipline. It happened after lights out so you didn't feel safe in your own bed. The prefect would turn up and you might be presented with your dirty shoes. You were taken out of bed and hit on the backside with a slipper or the prefect's gym shoe. You then went back into bed. I would often have bruising to the backside as a result of being hit with whatever instrument, but I didn't sustain any more serious injuries.³⁴⁴

Violence by senior boys in Academy House was common. They

would send junior boys to China, which meant flushing their heads down the toilet ... it was an occupational hazard as a small boy. You used to be able to get mini darts, which were about five centimetres long and mostly plastic with a metal point. Before a meal, all the boys would assemble in the common room ... someone would bring out these mini darts

339 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.87-8.

340 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, p.88.

341 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, p.88.

342 Email from Alasdair Liddle to SCAI, 2 April 2021, at MOR-000000081, p.1; [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in email from Alasdair Liddle (former pupil, 1950-c.1954), at TRN-8-000000016, p.88.

343 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.3, paragraph 10.

344 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.13, paragraphs 47-8.

and throw them at the boys' legs. We were wearing shorts, so there would be a lot of skipping about, trying to dodge the darts, much to the senior boys' hilarity.³⁴⁵

'Angus' thought that one senior boy, not a prefect, was particularly sadistic because

he would pick a junior boy and ask him to get him a penny chew from McLaren's Dairy ... If there was any quibbling, he had a particular technique of twisting the boy's arm. He would use the knuckle of his index finger and punch between the arm muscles. I think he was a true sadist. I remember ... watching him do it to other boys. He enjoyed it.³⁴⁶

Just as at Glenearn, Sunday walks could be difficult. The same chasing game was inflicted on younger boys.³⁴⁷ Coming down a bracken-covered hill in the summer

the senior boys would go down the path and hide themselves on the upslope side. A couple of senior boys would herd the junior boys to sprint down the path. As we were running down ... they would push us off the path and we would go rolling down through the bracken. It caused vast amusement to the senior boys.³⁴⁸

A different form of assault, verging on torture, happened in the house common room where there were big metal storage heaters. In winter they would become very hot. As 'Angus' recalled:

The senior boys had fun making small boys sit on the storage heaters until they couldn't stand it any more. It happened to me. If you made enough noise and

screamed out in pain, you got off with it by eventually being released. There may have been boys who were injured doing that, but I didn't see that.³⁴⁹

Such abuse could have been prevented if common rooms were more closely monitored by staff.

'The senior boys had fun making small boys sit on the storage heaters until they couldn't stand it any more.'

'John', a contemporary and friend of 'Angus', also remembered Academy House as a place of fear:

I am not sure how bad it was in other boarding houses ... I presume the abuse I suffered was a constant throughout all of the boarding houses at Morrison's ... All I can say is that in Academy House it was particularly bad. You were scared when you were at the school but in the boarding house it was constant. Every minute of every hour you were fearful. As soon as you were back in that boarding house you were fearful. Anything that happened in there could result in things happening and you being hurt both physically and emotionally.³⁵⁰

He described how this culture of violence was normalised, passed on from senior boys to junior boys over time and was, as he saw it, even worse than bullying:

There were times when the prefects and senior boys would take over in the

345 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.13, paragraph 50.

346 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.14, paragraph 53.

347 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.14, paragraph 54.

348 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.14, paragraph 54.

349 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.15, paragraph 56.

350 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.17, paragraph 61.

boarding house ... They followed the traits and ways to act ... that the boys that had been older than them had previously acted. That was the key problem in the boarding house. That trait of that 'hell' continuing from one set of older boys to the next continued throughout my time at the school. I very much separate the behaviours I experienced from bullying. Bullying is unacceptable but I view it as a normal feature in school life. The behaviours that I experienced from the senior boys during my time there went far beyond that. There was a regime and the way the older boys and prefects behaved ran through every single thing you did. The victims were all of us who were younger ... There was no rhyme or reason why myself or other boys were picked on. You never knew when you were going to be picked on. You could just be sitting there and they could decimate the group to pick who they wanted to torture or they would randomly pick an individual. You could be walking down a corridor or through a room and the next moment these sort of things would just be happening. Sometimes it was systematic where every second [a] boy was picked upon. It was constant.³⁵¹

There was, clearly, a palpable lack of adult supervision or effective leadership within Academy House where younger boys were dreadfully abused. Children were not protected as they should have been.

Disturbingly, 'John' described how he could see the abusive traits in some of the younger boys who 'would become part of that regime in later years', behaviour that 'became increasingly more extreme the older they

got'.³⁵² Housemasters should have, as 'John' did, paid closer attention to the children they were responsible for in order to stop the onset of abusive behaviours. The culture at Academy House, however, was one where a blind eye was turned to abusive practices and where abuse was allowed to flourish and persist.

'John' provided clear, credible, compelling, and disturbing evidence about that culture, illustrating its scale and describing it as

a mixture of psychological pain and physical torture. The older boys would think up ways to torture boys then get a few younger boys together to try out that torture. They would then see which boys would last the longest under that torture. It wasn't just a slap with a towel, it was real torture. There were things like beatings, drownings, force feedings, things that they had made up but there were other things too. The standard thing would be for an older boy to raid your dorm and upend your bed. That was at the minor end of the scale. At the other end of the scale you would be taken out by a boy, taken away and have things done to you. That was mostly done by an individual older boy. Sometimes there would be multiple boys involved and you would receive a mass beating. I remember boys being made by the older boys to eat soap or given 'the rat's tail', which was being whipped with towels, during shower times. Sometimes the senior boys would hold you under water by way of torturing you. Sometimes that was at the swimming pool and other times that was in the bath or in the toilets ... I remember occasions where our shirts and pants would be soaked and hung

351 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.18, paragraphs 63-4.

352 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.19, paragraph 66.

out in the winter air so that they would be frozen solid in the morning. The senior boys would wait for a good frost so that they could do that. There were occasions in the boarding house where we were made to run around the common room and they would throw darts at us. There was an incident where I was shot at by one of the senior boys with an air pistol. I wasn't the only one who experienced that ... Sometimes boys would be hung out the windows two or three floors up ... either by one or two ankles. That ... happened to me on one occasion. There was no reason why that was done to me. The two or three boys involved just did it ... I was terrified. There was a boy ... who would use a bayonet to torture you with. He definitely had something wrong with him ... I remember other occasions having my head placed in a locker to hold me down then being beaten with running spikes. That happened once to me but I saw it happening to other boys too. Other times I was beaten with golf clubs, broom handles, and belts.³⁵³

Some boys even took notes of the abuse they carried out.

Sickeningly, some boys even took notes of the abuse they carried out, detailing injuries and the time it took for the younger boys to cry.³⁵⁴

'John' attributed this shocking culture to the housemaster who had left at the end of the previous academic year, namely, I.J.B. Short, the art teacher remembered for his short

temper and for belting an entire class, who had been housemaster of Academy House from 1961 to 1967. 'John' was not critical of Short's successor, Mr Auchterlonie, who inherited the problem in 1967 and

started to combat that culture ... It took Mr Auchterlonie working hard with the boys right up until I myself became a senior boy to overcome that culture within the boarding house. I knew at the time that he had twigged what was going on because he saw that we all had massively bruised arms when he saw us washing. I think that was when he started to genuinely work on the senior boys to try to change their behaviour ... I don't think Mr Auchterlonie was present when any of the abuse took place but there were occasions when he heard things happening and came into the room to stop things. I remember him dealing with things as best he could through giving boys a talking to.³⁵⁵

'Angus' was not so complimentary about Mr Auchterlonie. He does remember him speaking to the prefects and moving 'Angus' away from a particular prefect's table after complaints were raised by his father about the prefect beating and force-feeding his son. Mr Auchterlonie also expressed disapproval of corporal punishment and wanted to know of any future concerns. However, nothing fundamentally changed. Prefects continued to beat other boarders and the prefect that 'Angus' had complained about later assaulted him by throwing him against a concrete wall. 'Angus' felt the complaint made by his father to the housemaster was a contributory factor in that attack.³⁵⁶

353 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, pp.19-21, paragraphs 67-70.

354 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.21, paragraph 72.

355 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, pp. 23-24, paragraphs 77-9.

356 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.17, paragraphs 62-66.

'We have to be honest and say that we did not like all the things we saw.'

It seems that the housemaster's attempts to put an end to the abuse inflicted by prefects and senior boys failed due to a lack of support from the school. 'John' spoke with Mr Auchterlonie in later life:

Mr Auchterlonie explained what he had had to deal with and how he tried to do it ... Looking back, I think his hands were sometimes tied by the system and people above him. I did talk to another teacher in adult life ... who had gone on to become the deputy headmaster. He admitted that he got no backing in terms of trying to overcome the bullying and abuse in the school. I don't think that those who were in the higher positions in the school were really interested in what was happening in the boarding houses. They were interested in the main school, what was being taught, how the school was doing in games and what the end result was. I think the boarding houses were viewed as a separate entity. When it came to tackling these things in the boarding house it came purely down to the housemaster rather than the school.³⁵⁷

It does seem that, unlike many other housemasters, Mr Auchterlonie was trying to introduce change and he certainly responded to the complaint made by 'Angus's' father, even though this proved to be ineffective. Real change would have been difficult given the ingrained mentality he had inherited, and the school leadership's focus on reputation and results in preference to pupil welfare and child protection in the 1960s and 1970s.

By 1979-80 it is apparent that the culture still remained far from perfect. There is an interesting draft of a letter to parents in one of the few remaining files of the time. It is from the housemaster of Academy House and his wife who, having reviewed their first year in post, appear to have decided to write to parents in terms that are surprisingly frank:

We have to be honest and say that we did not like all the things we saw and have made a number of changes which we feel will be in the long-term interests of the boys. We now go to the Refectory as a House; the situation about entry to dormitories is more closely supervised ... prep. and lights out are more rigidly enforced. We hope that a policy of firmness, fairness, understanding and kindness will help the House to operate as a family and are sure parents will agree that the Boarding House Rules and Regulations must be adhered to if a House of 58 boys is to be adequately supervised.³⁵⁸

The mention of hopes for a 'policy' of kindness is striking. Kindness was certainly needed but there was little, if any, sign of it being apparent, over the years, to many boys. It is not clear whether the policies suggested were ever put into practice or their proposals even recorded. Before then, children appear only to have learnt of house rules and practices by being in the house or through the buddy system - when that system worked as intended. It is also instructive that the ratio of children to staff was high, and therefore difficult for staff to manage. A memo in the same folder reveals that finding staff

357 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), p.24, paragraph 81.

358 Morrison's Academy, Academy House Correspondence: 1979-80, at MOR-00000040, p.2.

was not always straightforward. It records discussion between the rector and the housemaster of Academy House and his wife, which highlighted that the 'main problem was to ensure adequate supervision in a house whose history was not good'.³⁵⁹

It is encouraging that by that stage the rector was becoming more involved with the houses than his predecessors. Change had, it appears, begun, although it was slow to take effect.

'Polly', a boarder in Knockearn up to 1985, could also see into Academy House from her house. The girls would 'watch boys getting beaten up by other boys. One boy would have another one by his neck or they would be kicking each other. It really was called the rumpus room and that's what everyone called it.'³⁶⁰

Other boys' houses

As the experiences above make clear, the character and competence of a housemaster was critical. 'Bill', whose parents were abroad, started at Morrison's in 1950, aged three. He remained at the school for 15 years and experienced a range of boarding houses, two of them good and one bad. His account supports the inconsistency experienced by children because of the failure to ensure that staff were appropriately appointed.

'Bill's' first house was 'good':

I started at Newstead ... A woman used to take in kindergarten boarders of both sexes. She called it a children's hotel. It welcomed the children of colonial parents. I was there for four years until the age of seven, even starting my first day at school from there, at Croftweit, aged five. I

can remember very little from this period, except a general memory of warmth and kindness.³⁶¹

His second house, where he resided for seven years during the mid-1950s and early 1960s, was Whinmount, a privately run house administered by an ex-colonial policeman and his wife who were, in his view, brutal and overly strict. There was overuse of the cane.³⁶²

'I have a memory from Morrison's of me flinching and stuttering because I was so scared.'

That view was shared by 'Thompson', who was in Whinmount in his first year, having travelled from India aged seven. He remembered being beaten with a slipper by both the housemaster and his wife.³⁶³ He also recalled the brutality of the society he had entered:

I have a memory from Morrison's of me flinching and stuttering because I was so scared. I think that comes from the constant beatings and bullying. I didn't know how to fight. Indian kids don't really fight so I had never been in a fight. I remember near the beginning of my time there a horrible little boy challenged me to a fight. I was about seven and a half and ... I was just standing there with my arms at my side and head down. The guy charged at me but he ran straight into my head and his nose burst. I was still none the wiser as to why this was happening.³⁶⁴

359 Morrison's Academy, Academy House Correspondence: 1979-80, at MOR-000000040, p.23.

360 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.24, paragraph 107.

361 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in letter of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950-65), at TRN-8-000000016, p.83.

362 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in letter of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950-65), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.83-4.

363 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.76.

364 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, p.71.

Both 'Bill' and 'Thompson' recalled that the food at Whinmount was dreadful. Eventually, 'Bill' succeeded in persuading his parents to move him, using the food as a reason. He progressed onto Ogilvie House which was radically different - caring, kinder, and with good food.³⁶⁵ It seems that 'Bill's' departure from Whinmount 'encouraged a wave of complaints and within a year Whinmount was closed down by the school and all the kids were moved elsewhere. I suspect that the rector [J.E.G. Quick] was unaware of how it had been ... and the school acted very quickly in response to complaints.'³⁶⁶

That is charitable; the head should have been aware that a boarding house was not providing appropriate care long before it got to the stage of being so bad that children were moved and it was closed down. Whilst the school could respond appropriately

to complaints in some instances - no doubt as a damage limitation exercise to avoid reputational harm - it seems to have been unable to be proactive with a view to ensuring appropriate care and a safe environment for children. It continued to make inappropriate boarding house appointments for decades to come. That was evident in the appointment of Mr MacLennan as housemaster for Dalmhor, in the same year that Whinmount's housemaster had come under greater scrutiny. For subsequent decades, in relation to staff recruitment, the school remained focused on simply filling posts rather than seeking out the right people, with the right qualities, who could be trusted to care for children properly and ensure that they were provided with a safe environment. That failure meant abuse continued unchallenged.



Boys' school staff, 1960, with Mr MacLennan (back row, third from right), Mr Flett (front row, fourth from left), and Mr Quick (front row, centre)

365 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in letter of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950-65), at TRN-8-000000016, p.84.

366 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in letter of 'Bill' (former pupil, 1950-65), at TRN-8-000000016, p.84.

The girls' houses

Overall, girls' boarding experiences were better than those of the boys, but the girls' boarding houses were not all abuse-free zones. Again, much turned on the individual housemistress, and the same problems that arose in the boys' houses occurred.

'Jane' was in Ogilvie House between 1968 and 1973. Her parents were with the RAF in Cyprus. She felt that their overseas location and lack of communication contributed to the cruelty she experienced. Friends in other houses had positive experiences but Ogilvie was different, and it seems clear that that was on account of the housemistress. While 'Jane' did not see physical or sexual abuse, the emotional abuse she described was dreadful. The housemistress had

perfected how to deal the mental and emotional blows to vulnerable young girls, most of whom had parents who lived abroad. She was an extremely cruel individual who treated us with contempt and deprived us of the fundamental requirements of love and wellbeing for our formative years, whilst we were a long way from our family homes ... four to five years of living with this wicked woman will never leave me.³⁶⁷

'Polly' was in Knockearn from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, where there was also an abusive regime; again, the character of the housemistress was key. Bullying was constant in the house, but nothing was done. There was cruel emotional abuse. There were

no channels of complaint. If we did complain, we were the ones with the problems. We'd usually be told our

parents would have to be informed and what would they think of you? We should be ashamed ... There was also a message filtered through to us that our parents didn't want us and that was why we were in a boarding school.³⁶⁸

The culture of no clipping was strong. No one complained to the housemistress, tutor, or matron, for that

was the way it was ... occasionally they might have said 'If you have any problems come and see us', but it was the last thing in the world you would have ever done because you didn't trust them that what you were taking to them wouldn't come back at you at some point. It wasn't the culture to take anything to anyone, which is why probably for three years I just bottled it up.³⁶⁹

The Knockearn housemistress could, 'Polly' explained, 'be really friendly ... but when she got her thunder clouds they really took off ... it was in my P6 year that the real problems started and that was when she got into religion'.³⁷⁰ That happened in the early 1980s when the housemistress sought to influence the girls by taking them to see Luis Palau, a faith preacher, in Glasgow. 'Polly' told her parents of the plan to do this, and they refused to let her go with the other girls in the house. According to 'Polly', the parents of the other girls were not told about the planned trip and nor was the school.³⁷¹

The fact that 'Polly' had not participated in the trip was held against her. The girls who had done so, having committed to attending a prayer meeting at school, were condemned for their subsequent spiritual failure. The

367 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in communication by 'Jane' (former pupil, 1960s-70s), at TRN-8-000000018, p.61.

368 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.19, paragraph 88.

369 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.61-2.

370 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.20, paragraph 93.

371 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, pp. 20-1, paragraph 94.

housemistress 'was telling everyone, they'd dedicated their life to God and how dare they, 24 hours later, give it up again'.³⁷²

The way that the housemistress handled the outcome of the trip to hear the faith preacher caused much distress, as did other aspects of her conduct towards children. 'Polly' explained:

That was probably one of the lowest points of standing listening to it all, and I was told to leave the room at one point because I hadn't taken the oath to God ... that was seen as a heathen ... We were all in tears, to be quite frank with you, because ... we all knew this was not going to go away ... they were dragged to prayer meetings and it didn't go away.³⁷³

It seems clear, from 'Polly's' statement, that this member of staff was simply not coping, but that does not excuse the school's failure to address what was happening to the children. She was not being supervised as she should have been, nor, indeed, were there any signs of her being afforded appropriate pastoral care as could have been expected if the school had been fostering an overall caring culture. But it was not doing so. 'Polly's' perception was that the housemistress was 'going off her head',³⁷⁴ but there was no immediate response from the school, notwithstanding that the abusive way in which she was behaving was happening not just within, but also outwith, the house, in the refectory. 'Polly' recalled her forcing some children to finish their meals and standing over them while the rest of the school watched in sympathetic silence. 'Her behaviour got progressively worse' but she

remained in post until the end of the school year.³⁷⁵ It may be that the school felt it had no alternative if it was to keep functioning, but that is no excuse; she should not have remained in post to continue with her abusive conduct.

Insufficient action by staff to counter bullying was common in other houses. 'Anna' said:

I understand this is a child abuse inquiry, not a child bullying inquiry. As such, I will state that I was a boarder at Benheath from approximately 1954 to 1958. Having been a victim of polio at age two, resulting in a shortened left leg, I wore a specially made shoe boot. Guessing that this made me different from the other girls, I was subsequently bullied by some of the older girls. I was made to carry their many books to school, quite a walk from Benheath to Morrison's Academy, and polish their shoes every night in the boot room. Any physical chore was given to me without being noticed by senior house staff. Telling matron would only have led to more intense bullying.³⁷⁶

Bullying is, however, a form of abuse, and the bullying 'Anna' suffered was abusive. The failure of staff to notice it and intervene was deplorable, as was allowing a culture of no clipping for fear of retribution to thrive.

Such failings were manifest in Knockearn into the 1980s. 'Polly' described a bullying culture where

[t]here was no one to talk to, you just had to take it ... it's everybody bullying everybody ... You would have things stolen out your room. You would have

372 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.21, paragraph 95.

373 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.73-4.

374 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, pp.21-2, paragraph 98.

375 [Written statement of 'Polly'](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.23, paragraph 103.

376 [Transcript, day 226](#): read-in statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1954-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.54.

money – as soon as you got your pocket money you would go outside and it's nicked off you. I have obviously alluded to what happened to me in terms of my bed, having the hot water bottle emptied over it and then having to just sleep and get on with it. It is not easy when it's freezing cold in Crieff. It was just endless drip, drip, drip. Names. 'I'll tell on you'. Just the usual – the usual stuff actually. The usual bullying. Tripping you up, all that kind of stuff.³⁷⁷

Yet staff did not address the culture of bullying or even, it would seem, notice it.

Even into the early 1990s, things were still far from ideal, and some prefect appointments were, in 'Anna's' view, wayward and prevented disclosure. The head girl and house prefect were seen as overzealous in their punishments, but nothing could be done because

the head girl was quite pally with the housemistress and was going to get away with everything ... If we did have complaints then the housemistress was the most obvious person to go to, but I think she would have laughed and wouldn't have believed us and thought we were exaggerating.³⁷⁸

While 'Anna' accepted that the housemistress would have intervened, had she seen anything untoward, she observed that that was never going to happen.³⁷⁹ It makes the point that the culture remained one of assumption, namely assumption that all was well. There was a lack of curiosity about what was really happening. Appropriate enquiries of pupils were not being made. Staff were not willing to listen with open minds.

Common threads

The house culture described across all the evidence provided by applicants is remarkably similar in terms of the emotional and physical abuse that occurred. Where it existed, it filtered into other areas of everyday house life and did so with disturbing consequences.

Food

Like all the schools in the case study, many applicants complained about the quality of the food. As 'Angus' recalled:

Most of the boys seemed to be in a state of perpetual starvation. The food wasn't good quality. Eating was a problem for some of us. There was some fairly vile stuff served up, but the expectation was that we would eat everything on the plate. It was an obsession that had probably derived from the Second World War. The prefect at the head of the junior boys' table would be hurrying along anybody who was being slow, to eat it all, get a move on or else.³⁸⁰

'Angus' was referring to a time when boys ate in their own boarding houses rather than in a central refectory.

The treatment of 'Angus' by a prefect led to his father complaining to the housemaster, whose reply was interesting but eloquent of an inability to really see matters from the boy's point of view. While acknowledging the problem, the housemaster simply described the prefect as having 'excessive zeal' and added that '[d]elay at mealtimes, particularly during the short lunchtime break, can be irritating when caused by dallying over food'.³⁸¹ From 'Angus's' perspective the

377 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.58–9.

378 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.15, paragraphs 66–7.

379 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.15, paragraph 67.

380 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967–74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.6, paragraph 19.

381 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967–74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.17, paragraph 65.

'We were in such a state of perpetual fear that we weren't able to eat.'

housemaster missed the point spectacularly. He did not, it seems, understand, nor did he want to do so.

It was not just that time was short and the food was poor, but the approach to discipline at meals was emotionally abusive. 'Angus' also referred to

the psychological state of some of us. We were in such a state of perpetual fear that we weren't able to eat. We just weren't hungry. We were being forced to eat this stuff that we didn't want to eat and it led to problems. We had to sit at the dinner table until all of our food was gone. Other people had to sit there as well, so they would become angry and frustrated. It didn't happen to me, but one or two boys regurgitated their food and were forced to eat that as well. It wasn't a pleasant environment to be in. The eating problems tended to occur at the junior boys' table, which had a prefect at its head. We tended to work out our eating issues by the time we reached the senior boys' table.³⁸²

These problems were largely resolved by the introduction of a refectory system in 1978 with all pupils eating communally at Academy Hall, though the houses were fed at staggered intervals, given the numbers of students. That, 'Lewis' recalled, meant that mealtimes were

slightly more relaxed and it was a self-serve system. There were housemasters and prefects at the end of each table to

make sure that nobody stepped out of line or misbehaved ... The food was okay and it wasn't an issue. If you didn't eat it nobody force-fed you; it just meant you went hungry.³⁸³

'Polly's' experience, described above, showed that even the new system was not foolproof, given the way in which her housemistress behaved towards pupils in the refectory. Again, turning on the personality of the particular supervising teacher, force-feeding, even in the early refectory era, was not quite yet a thing of the past.

Fagging

Fagging at Morrison's could be seen as an honour, and many described it without rancour. 'Gregor' observed:

I wouldn't say there was abuse of the system as such. It was fairly standardised across the board what was expected of fags and what the payment was so it was a fairly relaxed way of doing it. As there might be consequences if you didn't do it right, you tried to get it right first time.³⁸⁴

For him that meant

[m]oney might be withheld. I suppose there could have been physical punishment as well. It was a two-way system, which was how it was set up. Generally there was supposed to be an ethos of reward for good work rather than punishing you for not doing things properly. It didn't always work that way and that wasn't everyone's ethos.³⁸⁵

382 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.14, paragraphs 51-2.

383 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.7, paragraph 30.

384 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.20, paragraph 97.

385 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.18, paragraph 90.

The ethos could be abusive given the cultures at times prevalent in the boys' and girls' houses. 'Angus' remembered:

If the fag didn't do the tasks he was asked to do, the prefect would beat him. It happened to me. I would make a mistake, not intentionally, and suffer for it. I was beaten with a gym shoe, which was what was most generally the instrument to hand. Down in the locker room, there might be drumsticks lying around which would be used in beatings. My younger brother ... has grim memories of being beaten with a drumstick. From speaking to him, I think he had an open, bleeding welt as a result of that beating.³⁸⁶

'If the fag didn't do the tasks he was asked to do, the prefect would beat him.'

'Anna' explained:

I was a boarder at Benheath from approximately 1954 to 1958 ... I was subsequently bullied by some of the older girls. I was made to carry their many books to school, quite a walk from Benheath to Morrison's Academy, and polish their shoes every night in the boot room. Any physical chore was given to me without being noticed by senior house staff. Telling matron would only have led to more intense bullying.³⁸⁷

The bullying she suffered was abusive. The failure of staff to notice it and intervene was deplorable, as was allowing a culture of no clipping to flourish.

'Fagging' still existed in Dalmhor as late as 1986, and by that stage was seen as humiliating by those in other houses. 'Anna', who boarded at Croftweit, was troubled

because we saw two or three of the Primary Seven boys, aged 10 or 11, in Dalmhor House carrying the school bags belonging to the sixth-year boys. The bag could be quite heavy with books and sports kit. It wasn't just the weight, it was the humiliation of it ... It was known, by word of mouth, depending on which boy you were fagging for - you either got off lightly or you didn't. Some of the older boys were worse than others. The impression I got was there was no regulation of that. That was just the way the housemaster at Dalmhor decided it was an appropriate way to run a boys' boarding house. It certainly wasn't happening in our house.³⁸⁸

From what she remembers, it stopped when Dalmhor closed in 1986 and did not restart when, some years later, the same teacher became housemaster at Glenearn. It is unclear whether or not that was because the school was exercising greater control over the houses by that stage.

Bedwetting

Bedwetting was met with mixed responses. Some staff were sympathetic, particularly the kinder matrons. The responses of some staff were, however, likely to be abusive so children were afraid of it being discovered. As 'Polly' recalled: 'There was bedwetting in my dorms and we never told anybody about it. Girls just turned the mattress over when no one else was in the room and the staff didn't know. You just didn't show weakness.'³⁸⁹

386 Written statement of 'Angus' (former pupil, 1967-74), at WIT-1-000000694, p.13, paragraph 49.

387 Transcript, day 226: read-in statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1954-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.53.

388 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.16, paragraphs 70-1.

389 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.64.

'I hated his screaming, it was simply awful.'

Similarly, 'Thompson' said: 'I wet my bed occasionally at the ages of eight or nine. I was never caught as I would turn my mattress over. If you were caught ... the whole house would be informed by the housemaster to belittle you.'³⁹⁰

That was especially true in the boys' houses where it was simply another rod with which to beat the vulnerable: 'The problems ... came from the system of the older boys and prefects ... It was another thing that was used to pick on younger boys.'³⁹¹

In Dalnavorrar, the response from both the housemaster and the senior pupils to a boy who wet his bed was appalling. Four boys from the 1960s still remembered the cruel way the child who came from an island in the Pacific was treated. The child was a frequent bedwetter. Initially 'Geoff's' classmates and one matron tried to help without drawing attention to the problem because 'none of us wanted him to be in trouble with the older boys'.³⁹²

However, the bedwetting was discovered by prefects and also by the housemaster. Their response was shameful. No child should have been treated the way that they treated him, particularly one who was having to contend with what must, for him, have been a dramatic change in culture and climate, as between an island in the Pacific and a boarding school in a small town in Perthshire. The boy was made to wash his own sheets

and he 'would be beaten across the backside with a slipper or some such implement'.³⁹³ Similarly, Iain Leighton recalled how the boy 'received beatings from the prefects and housemaster with a slipper'.³⁹⁴ In addition, 'Thompson' recalled that 'the boy was belittled, and taken to the housemaster's study. Then he would come out in tears. He didn't tell any of us what the threats were given or what was done to him'.³⁹⁵

'Geoff' knew that that was wrong, but 'there was nothing I or any of the other boys could do about it ... It struck me at the time as being extremely unfair, because if you are asleep and you wet the bed you have no control over that. It was totally outwith this lad's control'.³⁹⁶

The impact on Iain Leighton of witnessing the treatment meted out to the boy from the Pacific was profound. He is still deeply affected by it. He explained:

I used to go under my bed and put my hands over my ears. I was covering my ears because I could hear this particular boy screaming. I hated his screaming, it was simply awful ... [he] was being beaten by the older prefects for wetting the bed. He was beaten, weekly, maybe twice a week. It was very frequent. The beatings took place in the dormitory downstairs. Some of the bully prefects went in to check his bed ... He would have been beaten in front of the other boys, and then

390 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.74-5.

391 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.14, paragraph 50.

392 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963-8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.87.

393 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.37.

394 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.105.

395 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of 'Thompson' (former pupil, c.1961-4), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.74-5.

396 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.37.

he would have been given the slipper by the housemaster after that. I am surprised he didn't jump off a cliff.³⁹⁷

He also explained that the 'treatment [he] received had an enormous impact on me. I had never witnessed such cruelty before and I have never witnessed such cruelty again, which is why I have been affected very badly ... if I knew the abuse never formed part of his life, then I would be happy.'³⁹⁸

'I had never witnessed such cruelty before.'

The impact on the child, the impact on other children, the lack of compassion or empathy shown by prefects and the housemaster, together with the school's lack of oversight, is difficult to comprehend. Such abuse should never have happened and the fact it did is a dreadful indictment of Morrison's.

Medical care

It appears that medical care in the boarding houses could be inadequate and, importantly, the opportunities to find out and investigate the cause of a child's injury - often some form of physical abuse - were missed.

As 'Gregor' remembered:

We would occasionally go down to the doctor's and I seem to remember a doctor coming to the school on a couple of occasions. I remember one time when I was in primary five or primary six we were in the recreation room lined up around the table tennis table with our shirts off.

The doctor was checking ears, looking in ears and he had a thermometer. I remember my arm was black and blue from being punched repeatedly. It was bruises on top of bruises. The doctor noticed and looked a bit aghast. He asked me what had happened. Before I could say anything, one of the other older boys said my injury was from rugby. The doctor seemed to accept that, and that was it.³⁹⁹

'John' raised two issues. Firstly, that children would not be honest about how they came by their injuries, and secondly, that medical care and recuperation could be dependent on whether staff were present in the house. He remembered having pneumonia, for example, and lying in the house sick room coughing: 'Unfortunately, the sick room bordered the senior boys' dormitory. As soon as the housemaster was gone the senior boys would come in and make sure that I wasn't coughing. I remember boys smothering me to stop me from doing that.'⁴⁰⁰

'Lewis' became ill in Glenearn, but the regime was such that he, lonely and frightened, could not ask for help:

In year one I remember being violently sick in the night and thinking I was on my own. I was only 12 years old but had nobody to turn to and didn't tell anybody because of the culture. Previously I would probably have been off school the next day but just got on with it because I had nobody to turn to and I didn't want anybody to know.⁴⁰¹

397 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.105.

398 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.127.

399 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.16, paragraph 78.

400 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.13, paragraph 45.

401 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977-82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.15, paragraph 67.

'The boys who were the abusers just received a telling off. There weren't any further consequences.'

Sexual abuse

Unlike some of the other boarding schools included in SCAI's case study, sexual abuse was not a predominant feature in the evidence. Nonetheless, it did happen.

'John' remembered two occasions. The first one involved senior boys forcing others to masturbate them. The other occasion involved something happening between an older boy and a couple of younger boys at the top of a hill near the school called The Knock. That was on one of the occasions when the senior boys took the younger boys out for a walk. It was not clear what happened but there was an incident of some kind that happened to other boys and of which 'John' was aware.⁴⁰² Staff were told about it and their response was woeful: 'I think the boys who were the abusers just received a telling off. There weren't any further consequences.'⁴⁰³

Iain Leighton was sexually assaulted by a senior boy whilst playing football:

When I was 14, I was playing outside the house in the field and we were looking for a football. There was an older boy who dropped my trousers and tried to do something to me. I ran out of the bushes. A couple of months later he had left. He had been in the sixth form.⁴⁰⁴

'Cillian' experienced years of abuse by an older boy. Over a period of at least four

years, 'Cillian' was forced to 'touch [the boy's] genitals. He would climax and then I would be allowed to go.'⁴⁰⁵ It happened on a weekly basis, first in the dorm, but then also in the shower or bathrooms, as well as on Sunday walks when 'he would find ways to separate me from the crowd. We would go away to an enclosed area and he would abuse me there.'⁴⁰⁶ 'Cillian' never contemplated telling anyone for fear of repercussions. The boy was 'very adept at coercive control ... [and there] would have been even more serious consequences because to be labelled as a "poof" would have certainly made you a target'.⁴⁰⁷ 'Cillian' suspected another boy in his class was being similarly abused.

Sexual relations took place between a matron and a sixth-form boy. It is of some significance that it occurred within the boarding house. Iain Leighton recalled a young matron who

looked like Marilyn Monroe. She lasted three months because she was found in bed with our head prefect. He was a nice prefect and very handsome. He got the flu and the housemaster found her in the boy's bed, which was a bit embarrassing. She said she was helping him get over the flu but she was actually teaching him the facts of life. We heard about it from him and it came down the line. He was very proud. We all thought she was great ... We were all sorry about what happened

402 *Written statement of 'John'* (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, pp.21-2, paragraph 73.

403 *Written statement of 'John'* (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, pp.72-3, paragraph 73.

404 *Transcript, day 227*: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.116.

405 *Written statement of 'Cillian'* (former pupil, 1967-75), at WIT.001.002.3981, p.14, paragraph 89.

406 *Written statement of 'Cillian'* (former pupil, 1967-75), at WIT.001.002.3981, p.15, paragraph 91.

407 *Transcript, day 227*: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1967-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.38.

because we all liked her. We were told by the housemaster she had other career opportunities to pursue, but she had been sacked. There was no consequence for the prefect and she had to take all the blame. There was no inquiry.⁴⁰⁸

However, a friend of Iain Leighton's remembered the incident differently; his recollection was that the matron had propositioned the prefect and it thus seems entirely possible that what happened was an overt abusive breach of trust on her part.

'Thompson', who was a little younger at the time, recalled that

there was a matron who helped out about the place. I can't recall her name. I believe a couple of prefects were having sex with her. She was scared of the prefects and just did exactly what the prefects told her to do. The prefects all had dorms, similar to ours, but the head boy had his own room.⁴⁰⁹

If the boys were right to think that there were no consequences for the boy, that seems quite wrong and could only have served to engender a feeling that the school condoned sexual activity by pupils. What can be said with certainty is that the house was not properly managed. Further, the absence of proper inquiry, response and leadership by senior staff demonstrated the wrong approach to overall pastoral care at Morrison's in the 1960s. It is also difficult to avoid the conclusion that the reputation of the school was prioritised over all else.

Impact

The impact of the abuse suffered by boarders at Morrison's has been long term for many.

'Colin' now describes himself

as somewhat introverted ... it was a feature of being in the boarding house or wanting to escape from the boarding house ... but what I did like doing was cross country running, because ... it was a way of getting out and being free of the boarding house, so cross country running, this solitary environment. And perhaps it was on the basis of that that I became a geologist, because you are out in the field.⁴¹⁰

'I did learn from it; I learned to always be kind to others.'

For others, such as Iain Leighton, the emotions are mixed. He is still haunted by the treatment meted out to an innocent boy. However, he has identified positives; while

there were unhappy years in the boarding house in Morrison's ... that has never dominated my life. Being at Morrison's and being at Dalmhor did not cause me huge problems in later life. I am the sort of person who looks for the positive side in things. If there is a black side, then I need to leave that in the past. But I did learn from it; I learned to always be kind to others and to animals ... I am remembered for stopping those ridiculous procedures and rituals amongst the prefects. I am glad I am remembered for that and as someone who was fair and who would listen ... I am sorry the housemaster doesn't come out of this well, but that is a fact. I can't hide the fact that his character was very complex, which came from his own upbringing.⁴¹¹

408 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.119.

409 [Written statement of 'Thompson'](#) (former pupil, c.1961-4), at WIT-1-000000419, p.3, paragraph 13.

410 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.43.

411 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.127-9.

‘It has left me resistant to emotion. I don’t trust people. And that won’t change.’

Sadly, for some pupils the adverse effects of the boarding-house culture remain part and parcel of everyday life, even now. ‘Polly’ said:

I think about my Morrison’s school experience every day ... Things come up. Please don’t interpret that as being always negative, because some of it is to do with schooling ... But, yes ... It lacked emotion, and that is why I think about it every day. Emotionally it has left me ... resistant to emotion, shall we say? ... I am very considered in my choice of involvement in things. I don’t relish friends, particularly. I don’t trust people. And that won’t change.⁴¹²

‘Cillian’ emphasised – as have others who were at boarding schools investigated by SCAI – that the fear was worse than the violence:

The fear was just ever-present. The hypervigilance was a result or was part and parcel of managing that fear. Constantly looking over your shoulder, constantly trying to negotiate a way through the building to avoid encountering senior boys who could potentially decide ... that I deserved to be punished for one thing or another.⁴¹³

Signs of progress: boarding house handbooks

It is encouraging to see that the school published a boarding house handbook for parents in 1999. It was, however, not

Morrison’s that instigated this. Instead, ‘[i]n 1998, HMIE issued a publication entitled *Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils*.⁴¹⁴ This included performance indicators, designed to assist the self-evaluation of residential institutions. This formed the basis of the Boarding Handbooks (for staff, boarders, and parents) produced in 1999.’⁴¹⁵

‘Care and Welfare of Boarders’ is a separate section and appropriately recognises the importance of seeking to ensure that

all pupils understand that bullying is anti-social and unacceptable ... To encourage pupils to tell someone – *anyone* – in whom they feel they can confide about bullying ... To encourage parents to report incidents to the school in the assurance that matters will be dealt with sensitively ... To ensure that there is an adequate and efficient system in place for uncovering incidents of bullying.⁴¹⁶

These are clear and simple messages – bullying is wrong, bullying must not happen, bullying must be properly investigated, pupils must be able confidently to report incidents of bullying and so must parents. They are all messages that could and should have been conveyed, and the practices they described could and should have been in place, long before 1999.

It also includes the following sentence:

‘Boarding has a long and honourable tradition

412 Transcript, day 225: ‘Polly’ (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-00000016, p.80.

413 Transcript, day 227: ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1967–75), at TRN-8-00000018, p.41.

414 HMIE, *Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils*, 1998, at SCI-000000045.

415 Morrison’s Academy, *Parts C and D response to section 21 notice*, at MOR.001.001.0053, p.3.

416 Morrison’s Academy, *School and Staff Handbooks – Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, at MOR-000000036, p.19, emphasis in the original.

in the school.⁴¹⁷ That was, no doubt, intended as a statement of the approach of Morrison's in the era following the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the ensuing growth in appreciation of the need for child protection and pastoral care. However, that era followed decades of abuse. The boarding tradition at Morrison's had certainly been long but it could hardly be described as 'honourable'.

School response

Gareth Warren, the rector of Morrison's at the time of the hearings, was candid in his acceptance of Morrison's failings. He agreed that there were real problems with boarding houses over the decades, from the 1950s to as late as the 1990s. He also agreed with his predecessor, Simon Pengelley, who had earlier acknowledged that there had been separate fiefdoms in operation across the boarding houses with no oversight being in place at all.⁴¹⁸

As rector, Gareth Warren had engaged with and encouraged former pupils to contact the Inquiry about these issues. He had asked Iain Leighton 'if there was any sexual abuse and I said no, but I told him about the incident when I was 14, when an older boy dropped my trousers and tried to do something to me'.⁴¹⁹ Upon learning of this, Gareth Warren had told him he had to advise the police. Also, Iain Leighton 'had mentioned to Gareth before that I had been badly affected by the physical abuse in Dalmhor between 1963 and 1967, especially witnessing the abuse of others. Gareth suggested that I make contact with the Inquiry and, if anything, he encouraged me'.⁴²⁰ That is a far cry from the attitude maintained by the school for decades before the 1990s, which was to

focus on keeping trouble under wraps to protect its reputation. It is encouraging.

Conclusions about abuse within the boarding houses

Pupils residing in the Morrison's boarding houses were physically, emotionally, and sexually abused throughout the period examined in the case study. Boys were physically abused by some housemasters who used their powers of corporal punishment even when it was not justified, and used them to inflict excessive physical punishment. Girls were emotionally abused by some housemistresses. Boys were subjected to physical abuse and associated emotional abuse mostly through the conduct of other boys. This included older boys, who were given too much disciplinary power then used it excessively and in situations where it was not justified at all. Bullying was common. Both physical and emotional abuse happened under the guise of the exercise of discipline. This was true in all the major boys' houses and occurred in other houses too. In the 1950s and 1960s in particular, violence appears to have been routine. An unthinking adherence to styles of discipline that were outdated and clearly excessive set the tone. There was no understanding on the part of either housemasters or Morrison's itself that those given power, whether staff or prefects, needed to understand that they held that power in trust, and that they needed to earn and maintain a high level of trust amongst the school community, only using their powers fairly, appropriately, and in a controlled manner.

This failing was fundamental and facilitated a culture where the power to be violent

417 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, at MOR-000000036, p.13.

418 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000018, pp. 67–8.

419 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.130–1.

420 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000018, p.131.

towards children could, and often was, wielded abusively. There were no systems in place to prevent unsupervised senior boys – prefects – with no training or guidance in relation to the use of their powers, to engage in abusive physical conduct towards younger boys in their houses. This was done either under the label of discipline or simply because they chose and were able to do so, without fear of repercussion.

It also happened because, until at least the late 1970s, there were no systems in place and no obvious oversight by Morrison’s itself to ensure the appointment of appropriate house staff and to monitor their behaviour. In turn, there was no system or oversight within the houses to ensure that prefects were appropriately appointed, and there was no oversight of their behaviour.

It is particularly telling that for some periods in some houses, less abusive cultures did prevail but only because of the efforts of more humane prefects who saw there were obvious flaws in the system. It is remarkable that such changes were not maintained by staff, though hardly surprising given that staff and pupils alike ignored rules introduced by the new rector in 1974 that prohibited boys from punishing other boys.

While a few house staff were, on the evidence, excellent, or were at least trying to introduce change, the impression given otherwise is that the school’s desire to simply fill posts took primacy, as demonstrated by its failure to properly monitor the boarding houses until the 1990s. Far too often, the school focused on reacting to the ordinary needs of the day rather than adhering to

principles of child protection and welfare, a habit repeated by some housemasters who turned a blind eye to their fundamental responsibility of keeping children safe and properly cared for.

In fairness, the task faced by the staff was onerous. Staff-pupil ratios were such that staff were overburdened and the fact that the worst time in the houses was in the fallow periods in the late afternoon, when staff would have been under pressure and were probably otherwise engaged, is telling. ‘Polly’ had some sympathy for the staff. She recognised that the pressure on them ‘was probably considerable’.⁴²¹ The school needed to appoint appropriate staff but did not always do so. However, that is not enough; a boarding school also needs to provide boarding staff with adequate support. ‘Polly’s’ narrative showed that support for staff was lacking and so much went unnoticed. As she observed, the school

would have been horrified if they knew that by the time I was in the fourth year several of the senior girls in my house were out having sex in the toilets of the Crieff Hydro with boys from Morrison’s. We were all covering for it. The staff had no idea.⁴²²

Sadly, that ignorance seems to sum up the house experience for far too many children.

Morrison’s contemporaneous response to all these matters which, although lessening in severity, were still prevalent into the 1990s, is troubling. The school should have realised how important they were and addressed them much earlier.

421 [Written statement of ‘Polly’](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.19, paragraph 89.

422 [Written statement of ‘Polly’](#) (former pupil, 1979-85), at WIT-1-000000503, p.25, paragraph 112.

6 Reporting

Many of the children at Morrison's did not report the abuse at the time. There were various reasons for this. Some were scared to do so, given the often intimidating cultures within the houses; some did not wish to upset their parents; some felt they had no one to confide in, especially as many parents were very far away, in some cases literally on the other side of the world; and some feared they would not be believed, or that reporting would have detrimental consequences. More fundamentally, they often had no sense of to whom they should go; or they felt that there was no point because staff were simply not interested. All these reasons, in the circumstances prevailing at the time, are entirely understandable.

'Gregor' explained how things were in his experience, which was from the late 1970s:

I can't remember if I mentioned any ill-treatment in my letters to my parents. I don't think I did; it would have upset my mother and would have shown an inability to look after myself. I think I just wrote about the weather and what I had learned at school that week. When I went back home at the end of the first year I told my parents that I didn't like it at Morrison's Academy and I didn't want to go back. However my parents' move to Germany meant that I did go back. I don't remember if I told them about the abuse I was suffering. I may have mentioned

about being hit, but I may have fudged the issue. The abuse went on right up until the last day of term ... so there would have been bruising on me that was visible when I went home ... I don't recall making any formal report about the abuse to anyone when I was at school ... When you're nine or ten years old and you don't know any different that's what life is. That's what you got used to and that's what you accepted because there wasn't a knowledge of anything different.⁴²³

Some children did report abuse, with varying consequences and outcomes.

A world of silence: no clipping

There was, in common with other boarding schools, a culture of silence at Morrison's. Even when teachers said that they could be spoken to about problems, children did not report either because the offer was not seen by the children as serious or because to do so would be understood as talking to 'the enemy'.⁴²⁴

At its most extreme, the culture was made plain to new arrivals in Dalmhor House, as explained by 'Thompson'. He had to run a gauntlet of older boys in a line who hit him to make it clear that he should never clipe. It had the desired effect but, as he observed, 'the staff all knew and were witnesses to much of the abuse that went on anyway'.⁴²⁵

423 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, pp.32-3, paragraphs 152-5.

424 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Colin' (former pupil, 1958-68), at TRN-8-000000017, p.17.

425 [Written statement of 'Thompson'](#) (former pupil, c.1961-4), at WIT-1-000000419, p.15, paragraph 63.

'I didn't talk about it to my parents because they would only worry about me going back.'

Even without such introductions, the culture of silence was quickly understood by the children. As 'Lewis' recalled:

I watched people getting hurt regularly but I was in a situation where there was no way I would go out and tell anybody. It just wouldn't happen as your life would be miserable. It was the culture of you don't tell anybody anything. It sounds crazy now as an adult but that's what it was. You thought it wasn't right but you couldn't tell anyone.⁴²⁶

Reporting to parents by letter

It seems that children were broadly able to engage in private correspondence with parents or others. 'John', for example, still has a letter he wrote to his mother asking her to take him out of Morrison's on which tear stains are visible.⁴²⁷

However, 'Anna' wondered if letters home were read by the school because one housemistress 'used to read girls' diaries and it wouldn't have surprised me if she'd read the letters home'.⁴²⁸

Children may have felt able to write private letters to parents but that did not mean that they would share their worries or report abusive treatment. Both the culture of no clipping and parents being abroad – often a considerable physical distance away – acted as disincentives to reporting. That combination affected Iain Leighton:

There would have been a culture of 'keep quiet'. I didn't talk about it to my parents

and I didn't mention terrible incidents to them even when on holiday because they would only worry about me going back to a place where I was terribly unhappy. My mother in particular wouldn't have wanted that and would have been terribly upset. I never wrote to my family when they were in Hong Kong. If there was something upsetting me about abuse at school ... I didn't mention it because I didn't want my parents to be upset or worried. They were at the other side of the world ... We just discussed it amongst ourselves, the boys.⁴²⁹

Even when pupils did report problems in letters it did not always help, and in one case it magnified the child's sense of isolation and of having been abandoned. 'Cillian' recalled that he wrote to his parents

in P4, my first year in boarding school, I would say following the half term, and the letter was basically asking – or acknowledging that me being in Morrison's was very important to them, and that I had no difficulty with the school, but that I was having difficulty in the boarding house. I asked them would it be possible to arrange for me to be moved to another boarding house, thinking that the experience would somehow be different. The mail used to arrive in the airport so my father got his hands on the mail first. He would have read it. And I only learned in 2016, when this happened to come up in conversation with my mother, and my mother said she never saw that

426 [Written statement of 'Lewis'](#) (former pupil, 1977–82), at WIT-1-000000968, p.19, paragraph 90.

427 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967–72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.11, paragraph 39.

428 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.3, paragraph 55.

429 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.121.

letter. But on the letter that was returned ... he told me never to write letters like that again because they were upsetting to my mother. It was at that point that I realised that two people who I never doubted would do anything but help me if I was in a difficult position had actually abandoned me. That was the experience of it to me. So I felt very alone. There was nobody I could go to.⁴³⁰

Reporting directly to parents or other family members

When he was in his mid-teens 'Cillian's' mother spotted bruises on his body when he was at home. She wanted to complain but he would not let her, saying:

'Mum, you can't do anything. If you report this or question it, then the senior boys are going to be told about it by the headmaster, and the consequences are that I am going to be subject to even more beatings than I'm already getting' ... I had been beaten for telling the truth, I had been beaten for not telling the truth. I realised the easiest thing to do was really keep my mouth shut. But even that would often result in a negative reaction on the part of the senior boys.⁴³¹

That, sadly, captures accurately how a child who was being abusively beaten at Morrison's was likely to feel.

Similarly, 'John' felt he could not tell his parents what was happening to him for fear of the consequences:

You even felt that you couldn't say anything to your parents ... It wasn't

because of what my parents were like. It was more that if I had then that would have got back to the school. I had seen people where it had worked out like that and all hell had broken out. It was like another level what happened afterwards, almost like a witch hunt. The bullying would just become even worse when somebody reported something.⁴³²

'The bullying would just become even worse when somebody reported something.'

That fear of the consequences of reporting is borne out by what 'Angus' experienced when he told his aunt he was being abused. It led to his parents complaining to the housemaster of Academy House. Whilst it had a positive effect in the short term, in the longer term little changed and, in due course, 'Angus' was convinced that his parents' complaint was what led to his being abused further.⁴³³

Complaining to family could be fraught with difficulty if parents had a 'stiff upper lip' attitude. 'Lindsay' would never have complained to the school about the abuse he suffered from prefects, but he did tell his mother. 'I remember being told by her to man up.'⁴³⁴ 'Lindsay' believed that his mother viewed the abuse as part of 'a normal growing up process ... she definitely believed that what was happening to us was in our best interests'.⁴³⁵ When 'Robert' told

430 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.45-6.

431 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.46-7.

432 Written statement of 'John' (former pupil, 1967-72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.25, paragraph 82.

433 Written statement of 'Angus' (former pupil, 1967-c.1975), at WIT-1-000000694, p.18, paragraph 66. See also Chapter 5.

434 Written statement of 'Lindsay' (former pupil, c.1963-c.1970), at WIT-1-000000957, p.9, paragraph 32.

435 Written statement of 'Lindsay' (former pupil, c.1963-c.1970), at WIT-1-000000957, p.9, paragraph 32.

‘There was no structure in the school which you could use if you had a problem.’

his mother about ‘being belted by the maths teacher ... she didn’t do anything. I’m not blaming her. She was brought up with thinking if you deserved the punishment then you take it.’⁴³⁶

Reporting to the school

Within Morrison’s, it appears that for much of the period under review, there were few people that children felt they could speak to about what was happening to them. Well into the 1980s, the culture at Morrison’s did not encourage the reporting of abuse, and when abuse became known the school’s response was often inadequate.

As ‘John’ explained:

There was no structure in the school which you could use if you had a problem. There was no one you could go to speak to or dare to speak to. There was no one you could ask for help even amongst the teaching staff. There was nothing whatsoever that would allow problems to be dealt with. There wasn’t anyone I could report things to. That was partly because there wasn’t anyone to speak to and partly because there may be consequences if you did.⁴³⁷

Even visible injuries from excessive and inappropriate beatings were not acted on. On the occasion ‘Robert’ was belted by the maths teacher so badly that he sustained cuts to his wrists, the head of the junior school

noticed the injuries and asked him what had happened. ‘Robert’ recalled that ‘[h]e seemed to be concerned ... He had noted the marks. But that was it.’⁴³⁸

‘Robert’ also remembered his ‘mate from Auchterarder had marks on his wrists from getting the belt from the maths teacher, and his dad approached him at his house and there was an altercation. He was so incensed that the man had used excessive force on his son.’⁴³⁹ Even that achieved nothing. ‘Polly’ remembered that during her time at the school, ‘there were definitely no channels to take anything to anybody. I didn’t have an appointed member of staff that was someone I could go to and I am not aware of anyone that I would have taken something to.’⁴⁴⁰

Parents also had reservations about raising complaints for fear of repercussions for their children. ‘Anna’ described talking with her mother about a housemistress who force-fed children. Her mother

commented that in those days nobody would have said anything and I asked what she could have done about me being force-fed my dinner. She agreed there was nothing and nowhere to go. She had to be careful about what she said to challenge the housemistress because I was living with her and if she’d been picking on me, the chances were it was going to get worse ... I know she

436 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of ‘Robert’ (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.18.

437 [Written statement of ‘John’](#) (former pupil, 1967–72), at WIT-1-000001093, p.11, paragraph 39; p.25, paragraph 82.

438 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of ‘Robert’ (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.18.

439 [Written statement of ‘Robert’](#) (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at WIT.001.002.0817, p.14, paragraph 67.

440 [Transcript, day 225](#): ‘Polly’ (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.62–3.

did challenge [her] ... but she did it very carefully. It didn't happen again so it had the right effect.⁴⁴¹

'Polly's' parents tried to complain, without success, after she had told them of problems with a housemistress: 'To be fair to them, they did call the school on a couple of occasions and ask what was going on, and got short shrift ... [the school responded that] everything was okay'.⁴⁴²

Even in the early 1990s, pupils were still reticent about talking to staff because there was no system in place that genuinely encouraged reporting within or outwith the boarding houses. 'Anna' acknowledged that

if we wanted to report abuse within the school itself I think we were expected to approach our form teacher or the assistant and deputy rectors ... If there were issues of abuse in the boarding house the housemistress was the person to have approached. There were house meetings every week but I don't think they were for us to raise any issues. They were mainly for her to tell us what was going on. It also gave her an opportunity to call you out on things in front of other people from the house ... If there were issues you would have had to approach her directly about something. She would never have asked us how we were getting on. Or if there was anything wrong. She was the person to go to if we wanted to report abuse. If there were any grievances against her there was nowhere to go with that apart from to my parents. They wouldn't have had anywhere obvious to go with any grievances about her.⁴⁴³

A change in approach

In 'Anna's' experience it was only in 1991 that attitudes began to change. Her housemistress's 'superior started to take more of an interest in what was happening. She called all of the fourth-, fifth- and sixth-year girls out of the house for a meeting with her to discuss the housemistress because of complaints from different parents.'⁴⁴⁴ That said, 'It took six years for the school to want to hear our side of the story.'⁴⁴⁵ Morrison's should have investigated complaints by pupils and parents much earlier. The delay indicates a lack of urgency on the part of the school in its approach to cultural change combined with a lack of adequate leadership and an absence of appropriate systems.

'It took six years for the school to want to hear our side of the story.'

The evidence of staff and such documentary evidence as is available from later that decade does seem to confirm that change was, at last, taking place. Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001) stated that '[p]roviding a safe and nurturing environment for the pupils, both day and boarding, was always central to strategic planning' though he could not 'recall any specific focus on abuse'.⁴⁴⁶ He thought any abuse would have come to light given staff were present day and night. The difficulty, of course, is that was exactly what had been previously intended and yet pupils would not report. His assumption also mirrors the situation in 1974 when it was believed that telling pupils

441 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.4, paragraph 86.

442 Transcript, day 225: 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.68.

443 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.19, paragraphs 82–3.

444 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986–93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.20, paragraph 87.

445 Written statement of 'Anna' (former pupil, 1986–93) at WIT-1-000001011, p.20, paragraph 87.

446 Written statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at WIT-1-000000638, p.2, paragraph 8.

they could no longer beat other pupils would mean it would stop. Instead, it carried on, irrespective of staff being in the house day and night.

Nonetheless, I accept that his evidence indicates there was a shift in the approach taken by Morrison's from the mid-1990s – similarly to that seen in other boarding schools considered in this case study:

Reporting procedures were in place for pupils to voice concern or make a complaint. The guidance structure in the school included heads of year with pastoral responsibility for their year group, with support from senior management. However, pupils were encouraged to speak to anyone with whom they felt comfortable, regardless of status within the staff. Additionally, boarding students could avail themselves of staff at any level within the boarding house, staff at the school itself, and, as previously stated, the deputy rector in particular. I recall that some complaints were expressed but these were not in relation to abuse. They invariably were of the nature of complaining about house rules or disagreements with other students. With the passage of time I am unable to recall specifics. A record would have been made.⁴⁴⁷

No such records exist.

The handbooks for boarders, parents, and staff, available from 1999 onwards, also indicate that there was an increasing effort to inform pupils and parents of the school's

policies about children's welfare and their rights.⁴⁴⁸ There was a bullying policy, and in the *Boarding Staff Handbook* from 1999 the staff were instructed to follow the 'RECORD' acronym for the recording and reporting of abuse:

- R – respond without showing signs of disbelief or disquiet (do not interrogate)
- E – enquire casually about any injuries or distress
- C – confidentiality should not be promised
- O – observe the demeanour of the child carefully but not unobtrusively
- R – record immediately in detail what was seen and heard first hand
- D – do not take any action yourself or share concerns with other members of staff.⁴⁴⁹

Following this guidance, any incident should have been reported to the Child Protection Coordinator as soon as possible.

The need to report was emphasised in the pupil handbooks and the possibility of enabling a child to consult with an independent counsellor was mentioned.⁴⁵⁰ The earliest available iteration said simply that if a child had 'a problem, complaint, or suggestion ... the school would listen', that pupils could speak 'to anyone on the boarding house staff, or a teacher' and that if they 'were worried about confidentiality, tell the staff – they will understand'.⁴⁵¹ It was a world away, in theory, at least, from the culture described as late as 1990.

447 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-00000018, p.145.

448 See Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarders' Handbook*, January 2005, at MOR-000000034; *Handbook for Boarding Pupils*, undated, at MOR-000000035; *Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, at MOR-000000036; *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.30; *Boarders' Handbook*, September 2002, at MOR-000000038; and see p.91 of this volume.

449 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.31.

450 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarders' Handbook*, January 2005, at MOR-000000034, p.8.

451 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks – *Boarders' Handbook*, January 2005, at MOR-000000034, p.8.

Whether this new approach allowed for abuse to be exposed, however, remains uncertain in the absence of records. It can, however, be said that as the era of boarding at Morrison's was beginning to draw to a close, genuine efforts were at last being made to facilitate the reporting of abuse.

That may be seen as supported by two inspection reports from 1999 and 2004. In 1999, it was reported, '[m]ost girls and almost half the boys felt that a member of the house staff knew them really well', and, significantly, that most pupils felt that 'they were safe and well cared for'.⁴⁵² It was further reported that almost all staff who responded to the questionnaire thought they 'were good at dealing with pupils' worries and complaints' and that almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire 'felt that staff were approachable and helpful'.⁴⁵³ Correspondence from house staff and management (usually the deputy rector) to parents was praised and described as 'a good partnership' by HM Inspectors of Schools.⁴⁵⁴ Gareth Edwards, who had by then been in post for three years, was praised for his active personal interest in boarding, but the need for improved communications between the school and the houses was noted.⁴⁵⁵ Whilst more than half the boys did not feel staff knew them well, it does appear that the scope for reporting abuse was overall much better.

A joint inspection by HM Inspectors of Schools and the Care Commission carried out in 2004 was indicative of further improvement. Relationships between staff and pupils were described as positive. In answer to the question 'How well are pupils supported?', the report reveals that:

Appropriate arrangements were in place for child protection and to prevent bullying. Teaching and non-teaching staff were familiar with child protection policy and how to implement these procedures. Childline posters were publicly displayed near the telephones. Staff had developed appropriate methods to record any incidents or accidents, including incidents of bullying.⁴⁵⁶

On an important practical level, which could only assist the scope for reporting, the point was made that '[a] recent increase in staffing had helped to ensure a good level of care and supervision'.⁴⁵⁷ Insufficient staff had been a problem in the past and undoubtedly did not help. Similarly, boarder numbers were further diminished in stark contrast to the full or overfilled houses of earlier decades. Both of these aspects emphasise that, to allow for proper reporting, staff-student ratios need to be such as to facilitate rather than hamper it.

Simon Pengelly, the rector who oversaw the end of boarding at Morrison's, thought that reporting at the school was good when he

452 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 5 November 2019, at SGV-000007089, pp.1-2.

453 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 5 November 2019, at SGV-000007089, p.2.

454 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 5 November 2019, at SGV-000007089, p.3.

455 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 5 November 2019, at SGV-000007089, p.5.

456 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at SGV-000007687, p.3.

457 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at SGV-000007687, p.5.

‘as a school, we view the Inquiry as vitally important to give a voice to those who suffered abuse’

joined in 2004. However, he was referring to reporting within the school where form teachers or tutors reported to heads of year, who in turn reported to him. That route could allow some information about what was happening in the boarding houses to reach him *if* it were disclosed by pupils to, or picked up by, teaching staff, but ‘there wasn’t a weekly report from the head of the house’.⁴⁵⁸

He also believed that pupils were willing to speak to their teachers and tutors about problems they were experiencing. Complaints from different sources could be about

anything from ‘Why is my daughter not in the lead role in the school musical?’ to, you know, ‘Mr So and So isn’t doing a very good job in the classroom’, or ... ‘We don’t like the food in the dining hall’. Anything like that would be put into the weekly report.⁴⁵⁹

It would ‘absolutely’ include teachers noticing that a child was not eating.⁴⁶⁰ It was also possible for house staff to speak directly to the rector.

That willingness to notice and listen is of course encouraging, but the absence of any formal weekly reporting from the houses was an omission that should have been resolved long before then. The fact that abuse was not complained of by pupils did not mean that it was not taking place.

Response to evidence about reporting

Morrison’s accepted that the culture throughout most of the second half of the twentieth century had not allowed for proper reporting. I accept that there was a difficulty for the school in that it was unable to respond fully because of the lack of records. I also accept that, as the school made plain, it was very difficult for the current leaders to hear of the impact of the many shortcomings of their predecessors.

On this, Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21) said:

I think, as a school, we view the Inquiry as vitally important to give a voice to those who suffered abuse, but also as an opportunity to learn from and to ensure that best practice can be put across Scottish education as a whole, not just applied to the school itself. As a school, we view this as a very difficult, challenging time to hear of our failings, and understand the pain that it caused to those that suffered, and we view our participation as a commitment to wishing to find solutions for the greater good and the whole, and again to say that we are sorry to all those who suffered from our failings.⁴⁶¹

Conclusions about reporting

From the post-war era until 1990, many of the children abused at Morrison’s did not report what was happening to them at the

458 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.27.

459 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.27.

460 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.27.

461 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, pp.143–4.

time. Some did not know what to report, or to whom to report, and many did not feel comfortable or safe in reporting abuse. Others did not want to upset their parents or were of the view that they would not be believed if they reported. A code of silence was an insurmountable barrier for many.

When children did report abuse at the school to parents or staff, they were not, in many cases, taken seriously. When abuse became known to staff, incidents were not investigated as they should have been, or the steps taken were inadequate and led to further problems. Abuse continued happening.

In the period post-1995

It is apparent that a sea change took place at Morrison's after the coming into force of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and

the extension of the schools' inspection regime so as to cover the promotion and safeguarding of children's welfare in boarding schools.⁴⁶² Children and their parents were afforded greater scope and demonstrated greater willingness to report concerns to the school. Processes were put in place which allowed them to do so with increasing confidence, although it is not possible to ascertain if that succeeded since records do not exist to allow an evaluation of their implementation. It is not known, for example, if any child took up the school's offer to speak to an independent counsellor. Inspection reports do indicate, however, that children did at least know that they had a voice, that they would be listened to, and that they would be treated with respect. Times were changing.

462 Children (Scotland) Act 1995, section 35; Education (Scotland) Act 1980, section 125A.

7

Reflections

The Morrison's section of the boarding schools case study produced many thoughtful and insightful reflections. Some are referred to below.

Childhood vulnerability

A consistent lack of compassion and positive engagement with children was a common theme at Morrison's in the period up to 1990. Such treatment could not have helped their development. Children, by definition, are vulnerable; children who cannot go home at the end of each school day are likely to be more vulnerable. By virtue of being children, they are in need of special care, support, and protection, even more so when home is not a place they can retreat to at the end of each day, and particularly when home is far away. At Morrison's, these factors were not always appreciated, and children's needs were often not met, even in cases where concerns about their wellbeing were well known to staff responsible for their care.

Iain Leighton recalled:

I learned as an adult the headmaster had written to my father expressing concerns about my mental health. I don't remember any concerns being raised with me. I do remember pulling lumps of hair out and my granny asking why ... I told her that I must have been worried about something ... I remember suffering badly with insomnia. I couldn't sleep and I was worried about things. I wasn't given any

help with that ... At that age you just got through things. I was a nervous, sensitive, insecure lad.⁴⁶³

It is disturbing to learn that despite noticing Iain Leighton's distress, the headmaster failed to investigate and appears to have just passed the concern back to the parents.

That approach was in line with a house culture where staff also failed to respond and preferred petty reprimand and restriction as a way to deal with pupils' anxieties. Iain Leighton remembered a specific example:

The housemaster used to like going through your locker to see what was there. I remember I had a spot on my face and I was upset about this blemish. I was told by the chemist about a product called Clearasil, so I bought that but it was confiscated as being unnecessary.⁴⁶⁴

More broadly, there was no real consideration of vulnerability which was instead exploited by a culture that encouraged daily abuse:

The ritual of bed checking in the morning was very important. If you are going to have any regime then you need to have discipline. In Dalmehor that discipline went beyond what was reasonable. There was the checking of beds by the two most senior prefects and by the housemaster. Not every day by the housemaster. If you didn't come up to scratch then you would be thrashed ... You were always fearful

463 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.102.

464 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.104.

you were going to be hit, especially by one of the older prefects. Someone was going to come up and bully you.⁴⁶⁵

Discrimination

In addition, discriminatory attitudes were evident at times and could be fuelled by teachers. In the early 1950s, Morrison's instilled feelings of inferiority in children who had secured state-funded places. 'Wallace' fell into that category, as did other local children who attended the school, and they were all referred to by teachers as 'tradesmen's children'. He was aware 'there was an attitude that no tradesman's child should be doing better than the fee-paying children. We were seen as the lower echelons of society.'⁴⁶⁶

'There was an attitude that no tradesman's child should be doing better than the fee-paying children.'

Referring to children in a way that made them feel inferior was not only derogatory – it was emotionally abusive. That, however, was the culture of Morrison's, and staff could be treated similarly. 'Wallace' remembered being told by a woodwork teacher, an ex-serviceman, who 'hadn't come into teaching the traditional way' that he had been ostracised by the other teachers from the outset and that the pupils followed suit.⁴⁶⁷ 'Wallace' recalled thinking: 'Why am I here with such despicable, ignorant people, both pupils and teachers, who can show such

inhumanity to a former RAF serviceman fighting on their behalf? They evidently thought we were not in their class.'⁴⁶⁸

Iain Leighton shared similar concerns, but about the school having a discriminatory approach to religion:

The school was Protestant ... If you were Catholic then you couldn't attend morning assembly ... I had grown up in Hong Kong in an environment where there was no racism and I had friends from all over the world. You are not born to be a racist. You are taught to be a racist. We learn from others who are racist. When I came to Morrison's in 1963 one of the boys in the boarding school said to me 'I hope you are not Catholic'. I had such a shock. One of my closest friends was from a Jewish family. I had never been exposed to any discrimination until that first day at Morrison's ... It was deeply shocking.⁴⁶⁹

Discriminatory attitudes in a boarding school are likely to be a ripe source of abuse. For that reason alone, a discriminatory culture should never be allowed to flourish, and respect for all must be engendered. To Morrison's credit, some positive action was taken in 1978 when the Deed of Trust was amended to read: 'the Academy will continue to provide a widely-based, typically Scottish form of education ... the roll to consist of boarders and day pupils, a good social mix, not an elitist group or groups liable to vie with each other'.⁴⁷⁰ How well that worked in practice may be questionable given the evidence from the 1980s, but it was a beginning.

465 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.103–4, 117.

466 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947–51), at TRN-8-000000016, pp.23–4.

467 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947–51), at TRN-8-000000016, p.26.

468 Transcript, day 225: read-in statement of 'Wallace' (former pupil, c.1947–51), at TRN-8-000000016, p.26.

469 Transcript, day 227: read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.102–3.

470 Morrison's Academy, Parts A and B response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0003,38.

Painful journeys

It was a painful journey for some applicants to revisit the time when they boarded at Morrison's and, amongst them, there are those who continue to live with it on a daily basis.

'Cillian', for example, who has spent much of his adult life caring for others, was still having to face up to the trauma of his own time at Morrison's. After a period of drug abuse that began at school, in part a response to the abuse he had suffered, he achieved much and became a psychiatric nurse, a psychiatric social worker, a psychotherapist, and then a counsellor to those abused in institutions in Ireland. But, as he observed:

the interesting thing from my point of view is that as soon as I had left boarding school ... I pressed the delete button on the decade of my experience at school ... [that] meant repressing my memories, which I successfully did by compartmentalising them and just sealing that compartment so tightly shut ... I had recognised that ... the fear, the anxiety that had taken shape or taken hold of me in the course of my time in boarding school, that I was suffering from certainly anxiety and subsequently depression. Things weren't right. But the achieving gave me an opportunity to mask that.⁴⁷¹

Eventually, he reached

a very interesting turning point ... I started to find myself reflecting on what my clients were saying to me, acknowledging very close similarities between their experiences and my own experience and

I then started to reflect ... the memories starting to resurface, and they needed to be addressed ... It was a great relief when I was able to complete that jigsaw because everything started to make sense.⁴⁷²

'Cillian' met with a psychologist. Separately, he engaged with the Inquiry to give a statement. In the two years since, both experiences 'have been percolating through my mind and I have noticed that it has made a difference'.⁴⁷³ 'Cillian' noted that he had become 'much more aware of why I was reacting, or overreacting ... in situations that I couldn't make sense of ... I have learned to know when to take a step back, and the way I live my life just now is I avoid controversy'.⁴⁷⁴

Nonetheless, the trauma resulting from his time at Morrison's continues to afflict 'Cillian'. When providing his evidence, he explained:

I am currently quite anxious just now. My anxiety is around whether or not I am answering your questions clearly, and that is because I don't have a healthy sense of self. I have no self-confidence. I have very low self-esteem. I often feel as if I'm just a waste of space. That ... anything and everything that I did, I wasn't doing properly.⁴⁷⁵

Similar themes have emerged of the lasting impact of the abuse suffered by others: a distrust of authority; a wariness of new people; and, fundamentally, an inability to trust others. I am very grateful to 'Cillian' and the other applicants who enhanced our learning by sharing their experiences, notwithstanding the pain it caused them.

471 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.50.

472 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, pp.53, 55-6.

473 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.57.

474 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.57.

475 Transcript, day 227: 'Cillian' (former pupil, 1965-75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.56.

Some who were abused, or witnessed abuse when boarding at Morrison's, also had positive memories of school. That is not unusual amongst applicants whose experiences fall within the Inquiry's ToR, as my other case study findings show. Iain Leighton came within that category and when his father apologised to him for shielding letters, revealing his distress, from his mother, Iain replied: 'There was nothing to forgive; what happened, happened and I would not be where I am today if it were not for Morrison's.'⁴⁷⁶ Nevertheless, he is still haunted by the screams of his classmate as he was abused by the Dalmhor housemaster and prefects.

The importance of an effective voice

Children must have a voice; it must be heard with respect and acted on where abuse may have happened or may be happening. Any boarding school that fails to do this fails its pupils and renders them vulnerable to abuse.

'Polly' was one, and learned from her experience at Morrison's when her own child needed to speak about bullying. The comparison was stark:

I spotted it quickly and my husband and I ... removed my son from the situation he was in. He had me to talk to and that was the big thing. I was there to listen to him. Nobody listened to us in boarding school ... Even if a child is shouting and is troublesome, they are still saying something. There is something there and you need to listen. And actually if they are shouting at you, they are talking to you, whereas we were seen as

being troublesome at that point and we shouldn't be shouting.⁴⁷⁷

'Lindsay' reflected back on his time at Morrison's and wished

there had been someone that we could have talked to as youngsters. Someone that we could have confided in and someone who would have listened to us. It was just wrong the way that we were treated and it would have been nice if there was a safety net that could have stopped that from happening. I would hope that what happened to me can't happen in schools today. There needs to be an independent way in which to check on the welfare of children. I would love to think that no child is subjected to the fear that we were subjected to, as all children should have the chance to grow up without fear.⁴⁷⁸

'Gregor' echoed those thoughts and emphasised the importance of having sufficient staff to allow children the opportunity to speak:

It can't just be left to run internally. There has to be more parental care ... but not what was ostensibly three adults, the housemaster and the assistant housemaster and the matron, to parent 56 children. That is nearly 20 children each. They just don't have the time to listen to them all. By the time you get two or three children in a room there is competition for your attention ... A ratio of 1 to 20 children was not enough. I think there has to be a checking in system or a reporting system that the children can access confidentially, without fear of reprisal.⁴⁷⁹

476 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.126.

477 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979-85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.81.

478 [Written statement of 'Lindsay'](#) (former pupil, c.1963-c.1970), at WIT-1-000000957, p.11, paragraph 40.

479 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.40, paragraphs 186-7.

That was driven by his experience where what was lacking ... was any way of feeding back to those that were in charge what was happening to me. Whether I would have or not, I don't know but I think one of the things that abusers will instil in you quite quickly is that nobody will believe you and that you will receive a worse punishment if you do tell.⁴⁸⁰

He is quite right; children must know that they can talk and will be listened to without risk of adverse consequences or retribution. It is encouraging that by the last decade of boarding at Morrison's there was some evidence of a shift in culture within the school. There were hopeful signs that staff genuinely wanted to listen to pupils, and the school made that clear to pupils, staff, and families. The school also offered access to an independent counsellor. That should be the minimum provision for any boarding school, and it should have happened earlier.

Employment practices

For years the appointment of both teachers and boarding house staff was ill-planned and often resulted in staff appointments that were far from being appropriate. In the absence of proper records, it is impossible to say what steps were taken by the school, but the impression given from the few extant documents of the boarding era, combined with the recollections of applicants, is that bad appointments were not uncommon and good ones were fortuitous. Failing teachers and house staff were allowed to carry on without fear of consequences for decades because the school was more concerned with reputation, at least until the 1970s, and because it appears that finding good people either already living in the vicinity of the

school or willing to move to Crieff was not always easy.⁴⁸¹

When 'Anna's' much-complained-about housemistress was dismissed, she 'was asked to leave and given a full reference and she got a job at a different boarding house in a different school. She left at the end of the school year.'⁴⁸² It had taken Morrison's at least six years to act on pupils' complaints but the housemistress was still allowed to remain in post until the end of the school year, presumably to make life administratively easier for Morrison's. In addition, her failings were covered up and simply passed onto another establishment which should instead have been honestly informed of her record. Morrison's may not be alone in having engaged in such a lack of transparency - I encountered it in other boarding schools during the case study - but that does not excuse it; rather, it is alarming.

Simon Pengelley, who became rector in 2004, talked convincingly about the need for the thoughtful appointment of staff and the importance of the relationship between house and school. The risk otherwise was the development of houses operating as fiefdoms, separate, and without adequate oversight, from the school, as had been the case at Morrison's. He did not think that was the situation when he arrived, in part because the boarding element had diminished so much.

Instead, he was concerned because

the impression I got ... was of a day school with boarders, and to my mind the boarders weren't as integrated as I would have liked. They didn't seem to me to get as good a deal as the day pupils. The majority of the staff saw themselves as

480 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.40, paragraph 188.

481 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015-21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.115.

482 [Written statement of 'Anna'](#) (former pupil, 1986-93), at WIT-1-000001011, p.20, paragraph 87.

staff in a day school, rather than staff in a boarding school, and there is a difference. Not many staff would wish to get involved in boarders' activities at the weekends, for example, and that is really important. Boarders have to have provision at the weekends, beyond just sport which happened on a Saturday morning.⁴⁸³

His response was to look 'for people who would fit into the boarding side of the school'⁴⁸⁴ when recruiting new staff. That was sensible, for his concerns chimed with the complaints of so many applicants who feared going back to a house where there was nothing to do except wait for the next bout of abuse. He 'tended to refer to housemasters and mistresses as houseparents rather than housemasters and mistresses'⁴⁸⁵ which made an important point about the nature of their role and responsibilities very simply.⁴⁸⁶ In tandem, he also ensured that '[s]enior staff monitored the work of residential staff through informal visits and formal discussion. Two governors also visited the houses each term to listen to the views of pupils and staff.'⁴⁸⁷ That should have helped in trying to ensure that staff were fit for purpose in the boarding houses.

Responsible house captains and prefects

The appointment of house prefects at Morrison's had a fundamental impact on the lives of boarders. Far too often, and certainly in the 30 years following the Second World War, prefects appear to have been selected for their ability to control rather than to support, understand, and

guide younger children. I have no doubt that the delegation of power to prefects was originally well intended – as a means of both teaching leadership skills to those appointed as prefects and helping to maintain well-ordered boarding houses. However, it was not supervised or monitored adequately at all. This appears to have been due to a combination of naivety, lack of understanding and awareness, and poor leadership, at all levels of the school. As a result, serious physical and emotional abuse became the norm in some houses, where successive prefects often perpetuated the problem by replicating the abusive conduct modelled by their predecessors. Whilst some prefects deliberately sought to avoid treating younger children as they had themselves been treated, they were the exception.

This should all have been obvious to housemasters, housemistresses, and the school's headmasters, particularly J.E.G. Quick, whose tenure was so lengthy. However, for many years the school's leadership was oblivious to what was happening. As 'Gregor' commented:

I don't see how the school could not have been aware that something was happening. To put fifty boys in a house together with eight boys in charge, it would be a huge level of naivety to think it would not be run by physical means. Corporal punishment was still being used in school; the housemaster and the prefects were allowed to use corporal punishment. I don't think there is a school in the land that doesn't have bullies of some description in it.⁴⁸⁸

483 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.39.

484 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.40.

485 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.40.

486 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.40.

487 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.44–5.

488 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976–85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.23, paragraph 157.

‘It was what they had learned from being abused previously themselves.’

‘Gregor’ was entitled to draw these conclusions. Moreover, I agree with him, subject to this: whilst it can probably be said that there are potential bullies in every school, a good school will seek to protect children both from becoming bullies themselves and from being bullied.

Relying on children to police other children is a high-risk strategy. One pupil summed it up this way:

The house captain was supposed to monitor the severity and frequency of the punishment used by the prefects, but they were all post-pubescent children in the early stages of emotional and intelligent development. They physically looked like adults but psychologically they were kids. It was like the book *Lord of the Flies*.⁴⁸⁹

Simon Pengelley put it more bluntly, relying on his experience both as a pupil boarder and as a tutor in houses: ‘You should never leave boys in control of themselves.’⁴⁹⁰ Any system involving leadership of children by children requires clear, defined structures; express direction as to what is, and is not, acceptable; and effective guidance and supervision as to how to use power responsibly. At Morrison’s, this was lacking.

Reflecting on his subsequent army experience, ‘Angus’ observed:

In the military, there is the Manual of Service Law and Queen’s Regulations. You know where you stand. Each day, there are part one orders posted, which

are legal documents. They are guides for soldiers and officers about what’s happening ... The thing that strikes me in retrospect is that there was no similar structure at Morrison’s. Discipline was applied arbitrarily. There was no written document or a formal lecture on the rules. We learned the hard way or through the advice of a peer ... with respect to the prefects, there was no formal code of discipline. It was what they had learned from being abused previously themselves ... I could see no checks and balances by the housemaster on the performance and activities of the senior boys and prefects. If you’re going to run a system, it needs to be monitored and regulated. There is going to be a need for boarding schools in the future. There’s a Latin phrase *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*, which means if you give people power over others, who acts as their guardians? There has to be a system and there wasn’t when I was a boarder.⁴⁹¹

I agree. For far too long, staff failed to recognise that the risks of having unsupervised prefects in charge of discipline had, in some of the houses, materialised to the serious detriment of other children. Eventually that changed but not before time. A child protection policy was introduced by the school in the 1980s, and anti-bullying policies were introduced in 1994.⁴⁹² These applied within both the school and the boarding houses. Copies of these policies are no longer extant and such knowledge as was made available

489 [Transcript, day 227](#): ‘Cillian’ (former pupil, 1965–75), at TRN-8-000000018, p.21.

490 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.6.

491 [Written statement of ‘Angus’](#) (former pupil, 1967–c.1975), at WIT-1-000000694, p.23, paragraphs 84–5.

492 Morrison’s Academy, [Parts C and D response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0053, pp.3–5.

to SCAI was 'based on the memory of former leadership team members of staff who recollect that these policies were in place but there was no actual physical copy of them'.⁴⁹³ Such written policies certainly existed by 2004, according to a joint inspection report from that year.⁴⁹⁴ Nevertheless, and in spite of the positive atmosphere the report described as present in the boarding houses that remained in operation at that time, '[f]urther training in child protection and supporting pupils who feel vulnerable should be provided for all house staff and prefects'.⁴⁹⁵ It remains unclear whether or not adequate prefect training ever existed prior to the cessation of boarding in 2007.

Wise words

The Morrison's witnesses were, I accept, well motivated. Without exception, there was a recognition that the culture in Morrison's had, for decades, been a real problem and that it had resulted in significant abuse taking place. Much thought was given to the future as well as the past and I record a number of striking, and encouraging, observations.

'Gregor', who was one of the few who, having been abused by prefects himself, specifically refrained from similar conduct when he could have replicated it, explained:

I don't hold any animosity towards any of my bullies. I feel that their behaviour was a product of the system that they had gone through themselves. Some people resisted it and some people got into it. I don't know if that's right or wrong. Also, to pull someone up for something they did wrong when I don't know what else went

on in their life. It may have been a pattern of behaviour that continued elsewhere, it may not have been. I didn't repeat that behaviour when I got older even though I had been through that ... system.⁴⁹⁶

'John' suggested that:

Pastoral care and having someone available to speak to, has to be in place within boarding schools. If that is in place then it will only work if the individual assigned that role not only has the trust of the child but also can trust the people who are above them. They need to have a way in which they can say what they found out and for that to be responded to appropriately. The people in superior positions to those individuals shouldn't be people who destroy that trust and then, say, approach the child themselves. That would destroy the whole chain of trust.⁴⁹⁷

'Geoff' emphasised the importance of supporting pupils' emotional development:

I make the point that teaching pupils to have self-confidence and awareness, be practical and survive the practical difficulties of life, you cannot miss out on their social and cultural development. To my recollection there was little, if any, of that at the school. And certainly the big thing, looking back as the person I am now, is the complete lack of emotional development. It was a very emotionally sterile environment in which to grow up. So the main thing there is that the lack of adult engagement, you cannot substitute supervision by teenagers, you need mature adults to develop children.⁴⁹⁸

493 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.125.

494 HMle, Morrison's Academy HMle Report, 22 March 2005, at SGV-000007687.

495 HMle, Morrison's Academy HMle Report, 22 March 2005, at SGV-000007687, p.3.

496 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976–85), at WIT-1-000000699, p.32, paragraph 151.

497 [Written statement of 'John'](#) (former pupil, 1967–72), at WIT-1-000001093, pp.32–3, paragraph 106.

498 [Transcript, day 226](#): 'Geoff' (former pupil, 1963–8), at TRN-8-000000017, p.100.

Nurturing a child's emotional development is plainly of great importance and it is not going to be easily achieved where a child has, conversely, been emotionally abused, as happened to many children at Morrison's.

'Angus' cautioned against complacency:

When I started off the process of giving evidence to the Inquiry, it wasn't to gain revenge or punishment on people who had abused me or my friends. It was to prevent it from happening in the future and disrupt any complacency which might exist. I think complacency does exist. I'm fearful of the response that I read from the advocate speaking on behalf of Morrison's at the Inquiry hearings. To paraphrase what I heard him say, it was, 'Some bad things happened 30 years ago but we gave up doing boarding 15 years ago and it's not a problem for us.' Even a day school, as we're starting to see in the English press, has its problems. I'm not sure that complacency has been disrupted within those in power today. That's what the Inquiry has to address.⁴⁹⁹

'Angus' is absolutely right. The fact that policies and processes have been written down does not mean that abuse will stop. There is no room for complacency, or assumption, in any school. It was those elements that allowed abuse at Morrison's to thrive. I was, however, encouraged by the evidence provided by recent headmasters of Morrison's; they seemed to share his concerns.

Reflections by previous headmasters and final thoughts

Evidence from three headmasters, all of whom adopted a reflective approach to their past experiences, suggested that they

were anything but complacent. Instead, they recognised the need for, and had supported, the changes in attitude that have taken place throughout schools in Scotland, including boarding schools, in the last quarter of a century. Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), looking back over that period, said:

I believe that in the past 20 to 30 years there has been much greater awareness of the potential for abuse in any residential setting involving children. The populace in general, and certainly professionals in the field, are more aware of the high level of scrutiny that should and must be applied to maintain the safety of children and to prevent abuse. The advent of robust disclosure agencies has helped to ensure that appropriate and safe recruitment is achieved and those choosing to undertake what is a rewarding and valuable vocation to do so in full knowledge that such accountability exists for the safety of all, both children and those caring for them.⁵⁰⁰

His reminder that teaching is a valuable and rewarding vocation is correct. The evidence from this case study has demonstrated that the vast majority of teachers enter the profession with good intentions, but the profession is also blighted by some who either do not do so, or who depart from their original intentions. Recruitment, accountability, and an uncompromising approach to child protection are of critical importance, as is effective leadership. The failures at Morrison's demonstrate that when leadership and management in a boarding school are poor, whether at school or boarding house level, abuse may run unchecked.

499 [Written statement of 'Angus'](#) (former pupil, 1967-c.1975), at WIT-1-000000694, pp.23-4, paragraph 87.

500 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996-2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.149.

Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15) reflected on his own schooling when considering how fundamental good leadership is. Appointing the right person is critical. It can be inspirational and allow a positive ethos to grow amongst both pupils and staff. He had experienced that at first hand and described his prep school as ‘a proprietor school, so the head actually owned the school, it was his business. He was a very decent, humane character and that influenced the entire school. So I never at that school ... experienced unpleasant behaviour from other boys.’⁵⁰¹

He was also fortunate at his senior school where his second housemaster

was a very humane, really lovely person. The housemaster is absolutely crucial to the relationships within the house and the feeling, the tenor of the house, and because he was that kind of a person it was a very pleasant place to be ... the regime he introduced, he made it abundantly clear from the outset that there was to be no – senior boys were not in any way to foist themselves ... he abolished fagging immediately on arrival in the house, and he made it quite clear that everybody was to respect everybody else and treat them fairly. That was the way he behaved all the time. And that had a profound impact on me.⁵⁰²

It also dominoed down through the house and despite some pupils feeling hard done by in missing out on having ‘fags’, the change took effect because the housemaster ‘ensured that it took effect’.⁵⁰³ These earlier

experiences had inspired Simon Pengelley and influenced his subsequent approach as a teacher and headteacher.

When he arrived at Morrison’s in 2004 to take up the post of rector, Simon Pengelley noticed limitations. He had inherited the school three years after Gareth Edwards had left. There had been bullying problems in the interim and he inferred that his immediate predecessor had left the school partly for that reason. When he tried to find out more, Simon Pengelley felt ‘[n]obody wanted to come out with it. I did probe a bit, and always I was fended off.’⁵⁰⁴

‘leadership is absolutely crucial’

Such a lack of openness was wrong, yet it did not trouble Simon Pengelley because he was confident that he

would be able to bring a new broom ... I stated my expectations of how the staff and children should behave towards one another at the start of every year and reinforced that regularly at assembly: respect, toleration, kindness, courtesy etc. I would say that these values became embedded ... I am a great believer that modelling is really, really important, and the behaviour that you as the leader model matters hugely, and ... that the housemaster is a crucial figure. Well, the head is also a crucial figure and he has to model the kind of behaviours that he wants the staff and the pupils to aspire to ... leadership is absolutely crucial.⁵⁰⁵

501 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.7.

502 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.7, 10–11.

503 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.11.

504 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.20.

505 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.21–2.

‘you cannot presume that you have safeguarding measures in place which are fine and work’

I agree with his views, but the situation he inherited indicated that Morrison’s was still far from being free from abuse in the form of bullying prior to his appointment. One of Simon Pengelley’s responses was to introduce staff appraisal. He thought it ‘important for a number of reasons ... you want to see that people are doing a good job, but you also want to develop them in their roles ... [t]o help them progress’.⁵⁰⁶ He thought an appraisal, then, could also be a good opportunity for a professional development review. I share his views. It may be a matter of providing additional training, or enabling teachers to keep progressing, keep learning, and keep developing through their own professional careers. Or it may be something else that will enable them to perform better as teachers, including in relation to child protection, which is every teacher’s ‘business’, not just for the person who is appointed to the role of child protection coordinator or something similar.

I was also impressed by the closing remarks of both Simon Pengelley and Gareth Warren on the final day of Morrison’s evidence; they demonstrated a professional and genuine commitment to the safety of children in boarding schools. The apology made on behalf of the school was sincere. Simon Pengelley’s words on the need for schools to employ good people were valuable, as were his final thoughts on the future:

The best way of protecting children ... in a residential situation is to employ well-

trained, well-qualified, experienced, and mature adults who have a strong moral compass and work within an environment which puts the care and welfare of children at its core, with appropriate and clearly understood procedures in place for when and if there are causes for concern. However, procedure of itself does not protect children. Good people do.⁵⁰⁷

With that in mind he thought it vital that teacher training should emphasise child protection and welfare. Acknowledging that his experience was some time ago, he made an astute observation: ‘[w]e were trained as teachers. And if I were designing a postgraduate course in education myself I would have child welfare at the centre of it, not as an add-on but as central to it.’⁵⁰⁸

Gareth Warren, still active in teaching and as a headmaster, was equally clear. He addressed ‘Angus’s’ concerns about complacency, quoted above, directly. Schools must not make assumptions, because

the world for children is constantly evolving, as it is for ourselves, and you cannot presume that you have safeguarding measures in place which are fine and work. There constantly has to be an understanding of what a child’s life encompasses, encounters these days. I always talk about walking in the shoes of the child, think through what they are experiencing. With my own children you get areas of understanding, but there is a world which they know of which I do not.⁵⁰⁹

506 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.23–4.

507 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, p.55.

508 [Transcript, day 228](#): Simon Pengelley (former rector, 2004–15), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.57–8.

509 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, pp.73–4.

He was about to take up an appointment as head of George Heriot's School in Edinburgh at the time of the hearing. When asked by senior counsel what his response would be '[i]f you go into Heriot's and they say "We don't have problems"', he replied, 'I wouldn't believe them. I think every school

has challenges, put it that way, on a regular basis.⁵¹⁰ That is the point. There can never be room for assumption or complacency. The challenges never stop. And, importantly, the risk of children being abused in a school setting – particularly in a boarding school setting – will never disappear.

510 [Transcript, day 228](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000019, p.73.

8 Records

Introduction

As part of the Inquiry's investigations, I requested and recovered documents from a number of sources. I am grateful for the input and assistance provided in this regard by Morrison's and by others who were issued with notices under section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005.

Morrison's: records available

Very few records from Morrison's survive for the period under consideration. There was a fire in 1952 which 'in effect destroyed all records' then in existence.⁵¹¹ Then, sometime around the year 2000, the deputy headmaster destroyed many of the existing paper files.⁵¹² According to Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015-21) it was thought that the coming into force of the Data Protection Act 1998 on 1 March 2000 required these paper files to be destroyed. It did not. That approach was misguided and, as a result, there were past pupils who were deprived of personal data they wanted to see and which would, otherwise, have been available to them.

For the majority of the time period under consideration it is simply unknown whether Morrison's had a records retention and/or

destruction policy. It appears that the first formal reference to keeping records was in 1999 when the first *Boarding Staff Handbook* was produced.⁵¹³ It has simply not been possible to create a clear picture of what documents existed before then.

Available records were reviewed by Morrison's during its preparation of the section 21 response to SCAI and copies were made available. These included the minutes of Board of Governors' meetings (1950-81);⁵¹⁴ minutes of Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association (MABHA) meetings (1959-77);⁵¹⁵ the *Boarding Staff Handbook* (1999),⁵¹⁶ and a punishment book (1974-9).⁵¹⁷

Gareth Warren had, at some point, seen records regarding the appointment of teachers, housemasters, and housemistresses which went as far back as the mid-twentieth century and continued for each decade thereafter. These files included records of interviews and references. From what he had read, these processes were thorough, but he acknowledged that with the appointment of teachers, certainly during the 1960s and 1970s, the focus was on educational ability and whether they would fit in at the school.

511 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015-21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.95.

512 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015-21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.95.

513 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.23.

514 Morrison's Academy, Handwritten copies of minutes of Board of Governors' meetings, 1950-81, at MOR-000000002 to MOR-000000008.

515 Morrison's Academy, Handwritten copies of minutes of the Morrison's Academy Boarding House Association meetings, 1959-77, at MOR-000000009 to MOR-000000027.

516 Morrison's Academy, School and Staff Handbooks - *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037.

517 Morrison's Academy, Punishment Records - Punishment Book: 1974-79, at MOR-000000039.

Child protection considerations did not feature. SCAI has not had sight of these records.

Gareth Warren also confirmed that he never came upon any records that indicated the extent to which, if any, the rector was involved in the oversight of the day-to-day running of the respective boarding houses in the period 1950–80. Furthermore, he had no recollection ‘of ever seeing or hearing of any record of corporal punishment to girls’.⁵¹⁸

Retention of records

The retention of school records was not regulated until the early 2000s. The Pupils’ Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003 requires that educational records ‘shall be preserved by the responsible body for a period of five years following the pupil having ceased receiving school education’.⁵¹⁹ Educational records are defined as records of information that

- (a) are processed by or on behalf of the responsible body;
- (b) relate to any person who is or has been a pupil at the school;
- (c) relate to the school education of that person; and
- (d) originated from or was supplied by any of the persons specified in paragraph (2).⁵²⁰

Persons specified in paragraph (2) are teachers; other school staff; the pupil;

and his or her parent. There are no similar regulations governing the retention of child protection records in schools. However, in 2011 the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) advised its members that: ‘The Scottish Child Law Centre has advised that child protection records should be kept until the 26th birthday of the individual concerned in line with NHS guidance’.⁵²¹

In 2014, SCIS confirmed this was still its recommendation. SCIS also considered the length of time that records relating to allegations against staff should be kept. After reviewing advice on documents’ retention issued by the Scottish Council on Archives and its equivalent in England (the Information and Records Management Society), SCIS concluded that, where justified, schools should keep staff records ‘until the person’s normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is the longer’.⁵²²

At least since 2015, Morrison’s has had a retention policy that states how long different types of records should be retained before their destruction or transfer to the school’s archive.⁵²³

The retention policy is based on the following: ‘legal requirements to retain certain records for set periods of time; the evidential needs of the school; discussions with staff who create and use the records; [and] benchmarking against Local Authority schools’.⁵²⁴ The retention periods apply to all records,

518 [Transcript, day 215](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.122.

519 The Pupils’ Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003, reg.4.

520 The Pupils’ Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003, reg.3.

521 SCIS, Child Protection Guidance (October 2011), quoted in SCIS, Retention of Child Protection Records in Schools (December 2013, revised October 2014), at LOR-000000112, p.1.

522 The Information and Records Management Society, Toolkit for Schools, quoted in SCIS, Retention of Child Protection Records in Schools (December 2013, revised October 2014), at LOR-000000112, p.2.

523 Morrison’s Academy, Retention Schedule, June 2015, at MOR-000000075, p.1; Morrison’s Academy, Retention Archiving and Exemption Schedule, August 2020, at MOR-000000074, p.1.

524 Morrison’s Academy, Retention Schedule, June 2015, at MOR-000000075, p.1; Morrison’s Academy, Retention Archiving and Exemption Schedule, August 2020, at MOR-000000074, p.1.

in any format. Retention dates delineate the minimum period that the records may be retained before they are destroyed.⁵²⁵

Gareth Warren stated that the school's policy for child protection was to retain records for '25 years from the point at which the child left the school'.⁵²⁶ The records 'had been kept in a secure cabinet in an assistant rector's room, and that is still our practice today'.⁵²⁷ This is longer than the SCIS recommendation that child protection records should be kept until the 26th birthday of the child - but may be helpful to individuals who want to see their records later in their adult lives.

Record-keeping systems

Morrison's had no written policies regarding record-keeping. Although there were no official, written, or specific policies on record-keeping in the past, Morrison's advised that they did have established record-keeping practices.⁵²⁸ The procedure for record-keeping was that school reports for each pupil were sent to parents each term, and copies of the reports were kept in pupil files. For the children who boarded, their reports contained remarks from housemasters or housemistresses. Medical records were kept in houses. The depute and assistant rectors wrote weekly reports to the rector, bringing to light any significant concerns in the boarding houses. Parents' correspondence to children

was kept in the pupil files.⁵²⁹ Pupil files for both day and boarding pupils contained records on 'correspondence, file notes, educational matters, boarding issues, [and] personal and social matters'.⁵³⁰ According to Morrison's, adherence to these procedures was demonstrated through inspections of pupil files and a complaints log in the houses.⁵³¹ The complaints log was kept by house staff and was regularly reviewed by the rector.⁵³² It is unclear when complaints logs were first introduced, or whether all boarding houses were expected to have one.

It is also unclear whether there was a punishment book in place throughout the period, whether this was reviewed by the rector, and, if it was, how regularly. The only punishment book made available to the Inquiry covered the period from 1974 to 1979, and contains pupils' names, their form, the date and nature of their transgression, teachers' initials, and 'number of strokes'.⁵³³

The publication of *Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils*⁵³⁴ by HM Inspectorate of Education in 1998 led Morrison's to produce boarding handbooks (for staff, boarders, and parents) in 1999.⁵³⁵ These 'provided the framework for the care of children'.⁵³⁶

The *Boarding Staff Handbook* published in 1999 states:

525 Morrison's Academy, Retention Schedule, June 2015, at MOR-000000075, p.1; Morrison's Academy, Retention Archiving and Exemption Schedule, August 2020, at MOR-000000074, p.1.

526 Transcript, day 215: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.96.

527 Transcript, day 215: Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000006, p.96.

528 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, p.40.

529 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, pp.38–9.

530 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, pp.38–9.

531 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, p.41.

532 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, p.38.

533 Morrison's Academy, Punishment Records – Punishment Book: 1974–79, at MOR-000000039.

534 HMIE, *Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils*, 1998, at SCI-000000045.

535 Morrison's Academy, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, at MOR.001.001.0053, p.3.

536 HMIE, *Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils*, 1998, at SCI-000000045.

There should be a confidential file kept on every boarder. This will contain copies of letters sent to or received from the parents, including copies of letters sent by the Rector, Depute or Head of Year if these have been passed to the house. Medical information should also be stored here and a record of any more serious disciplinary matters or complaints made by the boarder.⁵³⁷

The *Boarding House Handbook for Parents* states that house records were stored in the housemaster's office.⁵³⁸

The *Boarding Staff Handbook* affirms that a 'House Log' should be maintained, and should include communication with parents, doctors' appointments, boarders who leave the school for the weekend, and students going to university interviews. A 'Medical Log' should be kept separately, near the medicine cabinet, which specified boarders' medication, with instructions from the school doctor.⁵³⁹

The *Handbook* also states that if a staff member suspected that a child were being abused or neglected, they were to '[r]ecord immediately and in detail what you have seen and heard'.⁵⁴⁰

In 1999, an inspection by HM Inspectors of Schools praised the care afforded to pupils' health, which was 'well supported by

detailed and regular record keeping'.⁵⁴¹ It also noted that the *Boarding Staff Handbook* 'contained an appropriate range of draft policies ... [that] covered aspects of child protection, care and welfare and a clear complaints procedure'.⁵⁴²

Morrison's policy on data protection from 2008 outlined that the school adhered to the Principles of Data Protection as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 in reference to the information kept on past, current, and prospective staff and pupils.⁵⁴³

Staff recollections of record-keeping

Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001) recalled: 'Records of individual instances requiring the disciplining of pupils would have been kept on the relevant pupil's files'⁵⁴⁴ and that individual pupil files

were well-maintained, especially by guidance staff who would record interviews with pupils, either individually or in groups. Records were also kept by boarding house staff and cross-referenced to pupil files in the school ... Given the passage of time, I cannot recall there being a written policy but it may have existed. My judgment was that staff knew their charges well, and I believe that relevant records were kept on all instances of whatever nature reported by pupils.⁵⁴⁵

537 Morrison's Academy, *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.22.

538 Morrison's Academy, *Boarding House Handbook for Parents*, undated, at MOR-000000036, p.4.

539 Morrison's Academy, *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.22.

540 Morrison's Academy, *Boarding Staff Handbook*, August 1999, at MOR-000000037, p.30.

541 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

542 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

543 Morrison's Academy, Data Protection Policy, November 2008, at MOR-000000076.

544 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.143.

545 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Gareth Edwards (former rector, 1996–2001), at TRN-8-000000018, p.148.

Pupils' recollections of record-keeping

Former pupils of Morrison's Academy are unclear as to whether records of punishments were kept, and, if they were, whether they would be available. Iain Leighton stated: 'I am not aware of punishments being recorded. I have wondered if the school kept any records of complaints to parents. I doubt it, thinking of the early 1960s. If they did, they will all be destroyed by now.'⁵⁴⁶

'Colin' reported similar gaps with regards to punishment records:

The school reports I have purely give my academic performance; there is no detail of any of the punishments I received, but what happened in the school and what happened in the house were two completely different things. If there were any house reports I don't know whether they would have contained any record of the punishments.⁵⁴⁷

'Robert' said: 'I don't know if there are any records. I would love to see what there is, but I don't know if they exist or if they have been shredded or if the school would let me see them.'⁵⁴⁸

'Gregor' applied for his records but was informed that they had been destroyed:

I emailed Morrison's Academy and was told that they had no records of my time

at the school other than details of when I enrolled. I was told that my records were destroyed at the start of the millennium in order to comply with data protection legislation. Without access to my personal records the school were unable to state if they were aware of the bullying I suffered as any such incidents would normally be recorded in a pupil's file.⁵⁴⁹

In its section 21 response, Morrison's states that the school allows former students access to their records on request. Whether or not it can respond to such a request is, however, bound to depend on whether it still has them, and that will, in turn, depend on whether or not a person's records fell victim to the fire, or the intentional destruction inspired by the Data Protection Act.⁵⁵⁰

Conclusions about records

I am unable to draw firm conclusions about Morrison's records for the period prior to 1952, given the destruction of records in the fire. From the available information, it seems that until 1999 Morrison's had no comprehensive record-keeping policy.⁵⁵¹ When a record-keeping policy for the boarding houses was eventually introduced in 1999, this was commented on positively by the HM Inspectors of Schools.⁵⁵² It is unclear, however, how well this policy was adhered to in practice.

546 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963-c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.108.

547 [Written statement of 'Colin'](#) (former pupil, 1958-68), at WIT-1-000000529, p.26, paragraph 140.

548 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957-c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.20.

549 [Written statement of 'Gregor'](#) (former pupil, 1976-85), at WIT-1-000000699, pp.39-40, paragraph 184.

550 Morrison's Academy, [Parts C and D response to section 21 notice](#), at MOR.001.001.0053, pp.41-2.

551 [Transcript, day 229](#): Morrison's School, closing submissions, at TRN-8-000000016, p.12.

552 HMIs, [Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999](#), at MOR-000000030, p.4.



Inspection reports

Introduction

Until Part V of the Education (Scotland) Act 1946 came into force in 1957, there was no statutory control of either the setting up or the running of an independent boarding school by private individuals, organisations, or religious groups.⁵⁵³ Thereafter, and until 1995, the regulation that did exist afforded the state little oversight of a school's operation.

Inspection of boarding facilities: background

While there was no formal requirement to inspect independent schools prior to 1946, archived Scottish Education Department files released to the Inquiry confirm that regular inspections of boarding schools were taking place from at least the 1920s. No records of such inspections taking place at Morrison's were recovered but it seems inconceivable that they did not take place given the care and attention school inspectors demonstrated in the pre-war period.

Education (Scotland) Act 1946

The Education (Scotland) Act 1946 introduced a number of significant changes to the inspection of schools more generally, and in particular to the oversight of independent schools. Section 61 of the 1946 Act placed a duty on the Secretary of State for Scotland to arrange for the inspection

of every educational establishment.⁵⁵⁴ The Secretary of State had discretion as to the frequency and focus of such inspections.

Section 62 of the 1946 Act allowed independent schools to request an inspection, with the cost of the inspection being met by the school. Whilst section 61 theoretically applied to both state and independent schools, in practice it was section 62 of the 1946 Act that applied to independent schools.⁵⁵⁵

Part V of the 1946 Act required independent schools to register with the newly created Registrar of Independent Schools in Scotland; not doing so was a criminal offence. However, it was only with the Registration of Independent Schools (Scotland) Regulations 1957 that the relevant provisions came into force. The 1957 Regulations detailed the registration procedure and the information required. Whilst the 1957 Regulations did not establish standards for the care or education of pupils, they bolstered the inspection provisions outlined in Part V of the 1946 Act by bringing into effect a complaints mechanism. As Professor Kenneth Norrie stated in his report for SCAI, this

added teeth to the inspection process that had existed by then for the previous ten years. Under this mechanism the Secretary of State could specify in a Complaint

553 Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.318.

554 Education (Scotland) Act 1946, sections 61 and 62.

555 NRS ED48/1377, Registration of Independent Schools: General Policy, 1953-67, Minutes, 6 October 1955, at SGV-000007325, pp.41-2.

shortcomings that required to be rectified (having presumably been identified at inspections), in terms of the efficiency and suitability of the education being provided; the suitability of the school premises; the adequacy or suitability of the accommodation provided; the Secretary of State could also conclude that the proprietor of the school or any teacher was not a proper person to be such proprietor or teacher.⁵⁵⁶

The Secretary of State or the Department of Education could strike a school off the register or disqualify a proprietor or teacher. No further details were provided as to criteria to be applied when considering whether or not to do so. Morrison's has been registered as an independent school since 1957.⁵⁵⁷

The 1957 Regulations remained in place until their revocation by the Registration of Independent Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2005, which were in turn replaced by the Registration of Independent Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2006.⁵⁵⁸ The 2006 Regulations continue to apply today.

Education (Scotland) Acts 1962 and 1980

Section 61 of the 1946 Act was replaced, unaltered, by section 67 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1962, which in turn was replaced by section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.⁵⁵⁹ Section 62 of the 1946 Act was not repeated in the 1962 Act. This meant that, from 1962, independent schools were no longer able to request an

inspection and - like state schools - were subject to inspection only at the discretion of the Secretary of State for Scotland.

The 1980 Act remains in force today, though it has been substantially amended. One significant amendment was made by the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. It altered section 125 of the 1980 Act making it a duty of local authorities and schools' managers or boards to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people whilst resident at a school.⁵⁶⁰ It also gave HM Inspectors of Schools (HMIs) the power to inspect a school in order to determine whether pupils' welfare was adequately safeguarded and promoted. Until 2001 it was the responsibility of HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) to inspect the boarding facilities within a school.

Inspections of Morrison's educational provision continued to be carried out by HMIe until 2011, when Education Scotland was established and took over responsibility for the inspection of schools. Education Scotland has inspected Morrison's every year since 2012.

Other significant amendments to the 1980 Act were made by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and the School Education (Ministerial Powers and Independent Schools) (Scotland) Act 2004. The 2000 Act introduced new grounds for refusing registration of a school, and new grounds for complaints.⁵⁶¹ The 2004 Act

556 Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.319.

557 The current provisions on the registration of independent schools can be found in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended), and the Registration of Independent Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

558 [The Registration of Independent Schools \(Scotland\) Regulations 2005](#); [The Registration of Independent Schools \(Scotland\) Regulations 2006](#).

559 [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1962](#), section 67; [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#), section 66.

560 [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#), section 35; [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#), section 125A.

561 Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.323.

restructured the registration rules found in the 1980 Act, and for the first time included the criteria for the granting of registration.

The Care Commission and the Care Inspectorate

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, section 1, provided for the establishment of the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (the Care Commission). On its establishment in 2002, the Care Commission took over the regulation and inspection of care services, including boarding facilities at independent schools. The *National Care Standards* were published in 2002. The Care Commission was empowered to make recommendations and to set out requirements for the improvement of care services.

In 2011, the Care Inspectorate took over the functions of the Care Commission, the Social Work Inspection Agency, and the child protection functions of HMle. The Care Inspectorate, accordingly, became responsible for the regulation and inspection of the residential facilities at boarding schools in Scotland.

The Care Commission had, and the Care Inspectorate had and has, the power to make recommendations and also to issue requirements. Recommendations are, of their nature, neither mandatory nor enforceable. Requirements, on the other hand, are, when issued, mandatory and enforceable. Recipients are given a time within which to comply, and cancellation of the registration of an independent school is a potential sanction in the case of failure to do so. Where the Care Inspectorate is concerned that there

may be a serious and immediate threat to life or wellbeing, an application for emergency cancellation of a school's registration may be made to the local Sheriff Court.

The Care Inspectorate has now developed several quality frameworks to apply when evaluating care services. To do so, it has drawn on the *National Care Standards* and, since 2018, the *Health and Social Care Standards*. In 2021, the Care Inspectorate published its quality framework for evaluating boarding schools in Scotland.⁵⁶²

Prior to the development of the frameworks referred to above, the Care Commission and the Care Inspectorate applied certain themes and statements in the course of their inspections. Morrison's was registered with the Care Commission from 2005 until 31 August 2007 when, boarding having ceased, it voluntarily cancelled its care service registration.⁵⁶³

Inspection records

Unlike, for example, Loretto School, where Scottish Education Department inspection reports existed from at least 1924, the earliest such inspection in relation to Morrison's that has been found is dated 26 October 1999, and is a report by HMIs.⁵⁶⁴ Appendix C contains two tables setting out details of inspections carried out by HMle (1999s–2005) and the Care Commission (2006–7).

The focus of the inspection carried out in 1999 was pastoral care, support, and supervision of pupils. It noted that most boarders were satisfied with the quality of pastoral care and felt safe and well cared for. The inspectors noted: 'Most [staff]

562 Care Inspectorate, *A Quality Framework for Mainstream Boarding Schools and School Hostels*, April 2021.

563 Care Commission, Morrison's Academy's application to voluntary cancel care service registration (all care services except childminders), at CIS-000000234.

564 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030.

would have liked better access to staff development and training in aspects of care and welfare’ but ‘[t]he quality of pastoral care for pupils was good. Most residential pupils were confident that they could approach a member of staff who knew them well for support and advice’,⁵⁶⁵ although about half the boys expressed reservations about approaching staff. The ‘Main points for action’ are as set out in Table 9, Appendix C.

A follow-up to the inspection of October 1999 was carried out in May 2001. HMle concluded that the school had made good progress in meeting all of the action points and that no further inspection would be made in relation to the 1999 report.⁵⁶⁶

The next school inspection was in November 2004 and was jointly carried out with the Care Commission. The inspectors noted:

The majority of pupils felt the hostels were good to live in and their privacy was respected ... Relationships between residential staff and pupils were positive. Pupils appreciated the family-like atmosphere ... Staff took good care to ensure pupils’ personal safety and had created a caring, safe and secure environment ... Boarders felt safe and well supported in the school. However not all house staff were seen by pupils as approachable and responsive to their needs ... Appropriate arrangements were in place for child protection and to prevent bullying. Teaching and non-teaching staff were familiar with the child protection policy and how to implement these procedures.⁵⁶⁷

When carrying out the joint inspection, HMle applied the quality indicators from the revised edition of the HMle document *How good is our school?* and the Scottish Ministers’ *National Care Standards*, both published in 2002, to assess the quality of care provided by Morrison’s Academy. Morrison’s received the quality grades as set out in Table 8:⁵⁶⁸

Table 8: Quality indicators from inspection of November 2004

Quality indicator	Grade
Accommodation facilities	Good
Climate and relationships	Very good
Pastoral care	Good
Personal and social development	Good
Leadership	Good
Self-evaluation	Fair

Between November 2006 and 31 August 2007, when Morrison’s voluntarily cancelled its registration, the Care Commission inspected Morrison’s on two occasions, the first unannounced and the second announced. During inspections the Care Commission often sought the views of pupils, parents or carers, care and teaching staff, and members of the Board of Governors; and paid visits to boarding houses. It also examined a variety of documents such as school policies and procedures, and minutes of meetings.

The 2006 inspection was unannounced.⁵⁶⁹ During the inspection, inspectors found that staff were generally approachable and

565 HMIs, *Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999*, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

566 HMle, *Follow-up to the Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 28 August 2001*, at MOR-000000031, p.2. See also SGV-000006512 and SGV-000000757.

567 HMle and Care Commission, *Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005*, at CIS-000000251, p.4. See also SGV-000007687, p.3.

568 HMle, *Morrison’s Academy HMle Report, 22 March 2005*, at SGV-000007687, p.10.

569 Care Commission, *Inspection Report: Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006*, at CIS-000000253.

responsive to pupils' needs and that pupils felt that regular meetings were productive, noting that there had been five since August 2006. It was recommended that a copy of the *National Care Standards* be publicly available, such as on a notice board for access at all times.

The inspection in 2007 was an announced inspection and its focus was child protection, Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice, and staff training.⁵⁷⁰ During the inspection the inspectors carried out a review of a range of policies, procedures, records, and other documentation including the child protection policy; paperwork in relation to a child protection referral; agenda documents for staff training in child protection; staff review and development documentation; and boarding handbooks for staff, parents, and pupils. The inspectors met with three pupils who represented different age groups. The inspectors reported that all three felt positive about Morrison's as a school. The inspectors also noted the then uncertainty surrounding the future of boarding at Morrison's. The 'Requirements' and 'Recommendations' are set out in Table 10, Appendix C.

Morrison's Academy was inspected by HMIE after it ceased boarding provision in 2009. The report is dated 20 May 2009.⁵⁷¹

Evidence from applicants about inspections

Pupil recollections are mixed as to whether inspections were carried out and, if they were, by whom. 'Robert', a day pupil at Morrison's between 1957 and c.1969,

recalled: 'People came to visit the school but not when we were about. Once someone came to see what standard of French we had attained ... With regards to people's welfare, I don't think anyone came around.'⁵⁷²

Iain Leighton, a boarder from 1963 to 1970, said:

I don't recall any external bodies coming in to inspect the school, however my friend Harry told me there were inspections. I don't remember any inspections from the school either. Once a year, normally before the summer holidays, Mr Quick, the headmaster, would come to lunch. He would sit at the head table but he only came for lunch, there was no inspection. There was no supervision of the housemaster's post.⁵⁷³

'Polly', a pupil between 1979 and 1985, could not remember there being any inspections.⁵⁷⁴

No firm conclusions can be drawn from pupil recollections, but they do support the impression that internal or external inspections either did not happen or, if they did, were not regular. That would align with the evidence from other boarding schools in the pre-1995 period.

Evidence from staff about inspections

Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21) was the only member of staff who had some evidence to offer regarding inspections. He said:

I think the school may have been inspected by HMI in 1997. I am unable to verify this on the HMI website. This

570 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254.

571 HMIE, Morrison's Academy and Nursery Class, 20 May 2009, at SGV-000007185.

572 [Transcript, day 225](#): read-in statement of 'Robert' (former pupil, 1957–c.1969), at TRN-8-000000016, p.12.

573 [Transcript, day 227](#): read-in statement of Iain Leighton (former pupil, 1963–c.1970), at TRN-8-000000018, p.107.

574 [Transcript, day 225](#): 'Polly' (former pupil, 1979–85), at TRN-8-000000016, p.70.

would have involved a full inspection of the school and its boarding provision. An unannounced inspection of the boarding provision definitely took place in either 1998 or 1999. Inspections would have included speaking with children, individually and in groups. I cannot recall whether staff were present but HMI practice in this century would be that such meetings would take place without staff present. Inspectors reported their findings to me verbally prior to a written report being published.⁵⁷⁵

Conclusions about inspections

Morrison's may have been inspected only in relatively recent times, and it can only be said with a degree of certainty that the school was inspected from 1999. That means that during a lengthy period when blatant abuse of children was taking place in the boarding houses, there was neither external inspection

nor, it appears, any system of internal inspection.

The apparent lack of inspection at Morrison's pre-1999 was wholly unsatisfactory. The absence of inspection, and of its prompt to engage in self-reflection, must have played a part in fostering the school's own complacency and prolonged the scope for serious abuse to go on unchallenged, without fear of detection.

I accept, however, that overall, the evidence demonstrates that since 1999 the focus of inspection has been increasingly on pastoral and welfare matters. The methodology of inspection has also evolved and continues to do so. Enquiries are extended to beyond the staff community to parents; there is increasing input from pupils, parents, past pupils, and governors; inspectors attend meetings and activities; questionnaires are used to gather information; and school policies and procedures are reviewed.

575 [Transcript, day 227](#): Gareth Warren (former rector, 2015–21), at TRN-8-000000018, p.148.

Appendix A - Terms of Reference

Introduction

The overall aim and purpose of this Inquiry is to raise public awareness of the abuse of children in care, particularly during the period covered by SCAI. It will provide an opportunity for public acknowledgement of the suffering of those children and a forum for validation of their experience and testimony.

The Inquiry will do this by fulfilling its Terms of Reference which are set out below.

1. To investigate the nature and extent of abuse of children whilst in care in Scotland, during the relevant time frame.
2. To consider the extent to which institutions and bodies with legal responsibility for the care of children failed in their duty to protect children in care in Scotland (or children whose care was arranged in Scotland) from abuse, regardless of where that abuse occurred, and in particular to identify any systemic failures in fulfilling that duty.
3. To create a national public record and commentary on abuse of children in care in Scotland during the relevant time frame.
4. To examine how abuse affected and still affects these victims in the long term, and how in turn it affects their families.
5. The Inquiry is to cover that period which is within living memory of any person who suffered such abuse, up until such date as the Chair may determine, and in any event not beyond 17 December 2014.
6. To consider the extent to which failures by state or non-state institutions (including the courts) to protect children in care in Scotland from abuse have been addressed by changes to practice, policy or legislation, up until such date as the Chair may determine.
7. To consider whether further changes in practice, policy or legislation are necessary in order to protect children in care in Scotland from such abuse in future.
8. To report to the Scottish Ministers on the above matters, and to make recommendations, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Definitions

'Child' means a person under the age of 18.

For the purpose of this Inquiry, 'Children in Care' includes children in institutional residential care such as children's homes (including residential care provided by faith-based groups); secure care units including List D schools; Borstals; Young Offenders' Institutions; places provided for Boarded Out children in the Highlands and Islands; state, private, and independent Boarding Schools, including state-funded school hostels; healthcare establishments providing long-term care; and any similar establishments intended to provide children with long-term residential care. The term also includes children in foster care.

The term does not include children living with their natural families; children living with members of their natural families; children living with adoptive families; children using sports and leisure clubs or attending faith-based organisations on a day-to-day basis; hospitals and similar treatment centres attended on a short-term basis; nursery and daycare; short-term respite care for vulnerable children; schools, whether public or private, which did not have boarding facilities; police cells and similar holding centres which were intended to provide care temporarily or for the short term; or 16- and

17-year-old children in the armed forces and accommodated by the relevant service.

'Abuse' for the purpose of this Inquiry is to be taken to mean primarily physical abuse and sexual abuse, with associated psychological and emotional abuse. The Inquiry will be entitled to consider other forms of abuse at its discretion, including medical experimentation, spiritual abuse, unacceptable practices (such as deprivation of contact with siblings), and neglect, but these matters do not require to be examined individually or in isolation.

Appendix B - Corporal punishment in Scottish schools and related matters

The parental right of chastisement

The common law of Scotland granted parents the right to inflict corporal punishment upon their children.⁵⁷⁶ This right was statutorily acknowledged in 1889 by the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act, and repeated by its successors – including the Children Act 1908 and the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937.⁵⁷⁷

However, corporal punishment was only lawful if it were '(i) aimed at chastisement, in the sense of educative punishment, and (ii) within a moderate and reasonable level of severity. Acting in a manner beyond “reasonable chastisement” has long been a legal wrong.⁵⁷⁸ Although the concept of ‘reasonableness’ has changed over time according to society’s changing views on the rights of children and their parents, ‘cases from the earliest period indicate a judicial awareness of the dangers to vulnerable children of excessive physical punishment’.⁵⁷⁹ Therefore, although parents did have the right to punish their children, this parental right was not without limits – it had to have a purpose and had to be reasonable.

Corporal punishment in Scottish schools and the views of the courts

Throughout much of the period examined in this case study, corporal punishment was permitted in Scottish schools. Traditionally, in state schools, it took the form of striking the palm of the pupil’s hand with the Lochgelly tawse.⁵⁸⁰

A teacher’s power to chastise was not delegated by parents ‘but was a self-standing privilege arising from the obligation of the teacher to maintain school-room discipline’ which in the boarding schools extended to the residential side. Nineteenth-century court cases involving teachers emphasised that corporal punishment had to be ‘without any cruel or vindictive feeling or passion’,⁵⁸¹ and that a ‘schoolmaster is invested by law with the power of giving his pupils moderate and reasonable corporal punishment, but the law will not protect him when his chastisement is unnatural, improper, or excessive’.⁵⁸²

576 See Alexander Birrell Wilkinson and Kenneth McK. Norrie, *The Law Relating to Parent and Child in Scotland*, 3rd edn. Edinburgh: W. Green (2013). See also Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.346.

577 See Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.346.

578 See Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.346.

579 See Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.347.

580 See ‘How the Tawse Left its Mark on Scottish Pupils’, *BBC News*, 22 February 2017. The Lochgelly tawse was so-called because most teachers preferred tawses manufactured by a leather business based in Lochgelly, Fife.

581 *Muckarsie v Dickson* (1848) 11 D 4, p.5.

582 *Ewart v Brown* (1882) 10 R 163, p.166.

Little changed for much of the twentieth century. In *Gray v Hawthorn*,⁵⁸³ in 1964, the Court of Appeal emphasised the importance of discretion when it affirmed a teacher's conviction for assault:

There is no doubt that a school teacher is vested with disciplinary powers to enable him to do his educational work and to maintain proper order in class and in school, and it is therefore largely a matter within his discretion whether, and to what extent, the circumstances call for the exercise of these powers by the infliction of chastisement ... If what the schoolmaster has done can truly be regarded as an exercise of his disciplinary powers, although mistaken, he cannot be held to have contravened the criminal law. It is only if there has been an excess of punishment over what could be regarded as an exercise of disciplinary powers that it can be held to be an assault. In other words the question in all such cases is whether there has been *dole*⁵⁸⁴ on the part of the accused, the evil intent which is necessary to constitute a crime by the law of Scotland. The existence of *dole* in the mind of an accused person must always be a question to be decided in the light of the whole circumstances of the particular case ... such matters as the nature and violence of the punishment, the repetition or continuity of the punishment, the age, the health and sex of the child, the blameworthiness and the degree of blameworthiness of the child's conduct, and so on, are all relevant circumstances in considering whether there was or was not that evil intent on the part of the accused at the time of the alleged offence.⁵⁸⁵

The child was 11 and was belted eight times in the space of two hours for being dirty, having an untidy schoolbag, performing poorly in schoolwork, making spelling mistakes, and having poor handwriting, a factor exacerbated by the injuries caused by the repetitive belting. From today's perspective, aspects of the sheriff substitute's reasoning seem surprising:

[I] found no fault with the appellant regarding the punishments inflicted for having dirty hands and knees. I attached no importance to the total number, as such, of strokes delivered on the morning in question. What I found fault with was the succession of punishments and reasons (or lack of just reasons) therefore, as narrated in my findings. At some stage their repetition amounted to what I can only describe as a degree of unjust persecution. I inferred *dole* only from the excess of punishment in the circumstances narrated.⁵⁸⁶

I would not have considered it appropriate to belt a child for any of the reasons set out. I would consider it abusive.

The reasoning in *Gray v Hawthorn* was followed in the 1980 case of *Stewart v Thain*,⁵⁸⁷ which involved a headteacher smacking a 15 year old on the buttocks, apparently with parental approval. The Court remained loath to interfere in school discipline which was still very much a matter of educational discretion, where '[e]ach case must be considered in the light of the whole circumstances relevant to it'.⁵⁸⁸

583 *Gray v Hawthorn* (1964) JC 69.

584 In Scots law '*dole*' means corrupt, malicious, or evil intention.

585 *Gray v Hawthorn* (1964) JC 69.

586 *Gray v Hawthorn* (1964) JC 69, p.72.

587 *Stewart v Thain* (1981) JC 13.

588 *Stewart v Thain* (1981) JC 13.

Corporal punishment in boarding schools

In the boarding sector, the use of the cane by both staff and senior pupils was common, as was the use of other implements, particularly the slipper or gym shoe.

Outwith the classroom, teachers' powers to use corporal punishment were commonly delegated, especially in the boarding houses, to senior pupils, usually school or house prefects.

That may have always been the norm given staffing numbers but might also reflect the language of both section 37 of the Children Act 1908 and section 12(7) of the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937, both of which concerned cruelty to persons under 16. The 1937 provision, for example, which concerned behaviour of persons who had 'attained the age of sixteen years' stated '[n]othing in this section shall be construed as affecting the right of any parent, teacher, or other person having the lawful control or charge of a child or young person to administer punishment to him'.⁵⁸⁹

This case study has demonstrated that there was inadequate, if any, consideration given by schools to the legal position. Individual institutions followed their own traditions and styles although there was a general understanding from witnesses that the maximum number of blows that could be given was six, even if that was not infrequently disregarded. As for the delegation of corporal punishment to pupils it was simply the way that things were done and was often ill considered and inadequately supervised. And the lack of supervision exposed children to a risk of abuse; serious harm could obviously ensue.

Societal change in the approach to corporal punishment

While the courts and the boarding schools may have thought corporal punishment acceptable as a means of maintaining order until relatively recently, that was not the case in other areas of society.

Curtis Report

In September 1946, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Education presented a report to Parliament from the Care of Children Committee, chaired by Miss Myra Curtis. It was the result of detailed inquiry into the provision for children in care and its recommendations, strongly urged on the government, included:

We have given much thought to this question and have come to the conclusion that corporal punishment (i.e., caning or birching) should be definitely prohibited in children's Homes for children of all ages and both sexes, as it already is in the Public Assistance Homes for girls and for boys of 14 and over. We think that the time has come when such treatment of boys in these Homes should be unthinkable as the similar treatment of girls already is and that the voluntary Homes should adopt the same principle. It is to be remembered that the children with whom we are concerned are already at a disadvantage in society. One of the first essentials is to nourish their self-respect; another is to make them feel that they are regarded with affection by those in charge of them. Whatever there is to be said for this form of punishment in the case of boys with a happy home and full confidence in life, it may, in our opinion be disastrous for the child with an unhappy

589 Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937, section 12(7) as originally enacted.

background. It is, moreover, liable to ... abuse. In condemning corporal punishment we do not overlook the fact that there are other means of enforcing control which may have even more harmful effects. We especially deprecate nagging, sneering, taunting, indeed all methods which secure the ascendancy of the person in charge by destroying or lowering the self-esteem of the child.⁵⁹⁰

This insightful message is one that boarding schools ought to have taken cognisance of because they housed children separated from their families, a separation that, in itself, especially for younger children, created a vulnerability. Had the Committee addressed the punishment practices in the schools examined in this case study, I conclude that it is likely that their criticisms of corporal punishment would have applied to them with equal force.

The Administration of Children's Homes (Scotland) Regulations 1959

Although not applicable to boarding schools, the Administration of Children's Homes (Scotland) Regulations 1959, which applied to both local authority and voluntary homes from 1 August 1959, reflected a shift in social attitudes to the punishment of children in any institution.

The Regulations 'contained rules for the administration of homes, the welfare of children accommodated therein, and for oversight of both these matters'.⁵⁹¹ Regulation 1 required those responsible for the administration of the home to ensure that it was 'conducted in such manner and on such principles as will secure the well-being

of the children of the home'.⁵⁹² Regulation 11 provided that corporal punishment may 'exceptionally be administered'.⁵⁹³

Approved Schools (Scotland) Rules 1961

Again, though not applicable to boarding schools, the standards noted in the Approved Schools (Scotland) Rules 1961 should have had an impact on the thinking of boarding schools in relation to their use of corporal punishment.

Rule 31 dealt specifically with corporal punishment. Some of the conditions referred to were apt for all boarding schools in Scotland at that time:

(a) for an offence committed in the course of ordinary lessons in the schoolroom the principal teacher may be authorised by the Managers to inflict on the hands not more than three strokes in all;

...

(c) except when the punishment is inflicted in the presence of a class in a schoolroom, an adult witness must be present;

(d) no pupil may be called upon to assist the person inflicting the punishment;

...

(f) for boys under 14 years of age, the number of strokes may not exceed two on each hand or four on the posterior over ordinary cloth trousers;

(g) for boys who have attained the age of 14 years, the number of strokes may not exceed three on each hand or six on the posterior over ordinary cloth trousers;

(h) only a light tawse may be used: a cane or other form of striking is forbidden ...

590 The Curtis Report (1946), at LEG.001.001.8722, pp.168-9, paragraph xviii.

591 Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.204.

592 The Administration of Children's Homes (Scotland) Regulations (1959), regulation 1, at LEG.001.001.2719.

593 The Administration of Children's Homes (Scotland) Regulations (1959), regulation 11, at LEG.001.001.2723.

and any person who commits a breach of this Rule shall be liable to dismissal or other disciplinary action.⁵⁹⁴

Rule 32 provided that full particulars of any corporal punishments should be recorded in a punishment book by the headmaster.

It is not obvious that much regard was had to these rules in the operation of the boarding schools considered in this case study, and the approach taken to corporal punishment, just as with the recording of punishments, was variable. The tone of each school very much depended, for decades, on the outlook of the headmaster. Some were progressive, others not. Far too much was left to the discretion of individual teachers, some of whom had dreadful reputations amongst pupils for their excesses, which only demonstrates an absence of necessary oversight.

The position was even worse when corporal punishment by senior pupils is considered. While there was evidence of a change of outlook from the pupils themselves during the 1960s,⁵⁹⁵ there was often no oversight by the schools, on occasion, consciously.

Elimination of corporal punishment in state schools

By the late 1960s, following agreement in principle that the teaching profession should be encouraged to move towards the gradual elimination of corporal punishment, a consultative body – the Liaison Committee on Educational Matters – issued a booklet entitled *Elimination of Corporal Punishment in Schools: Statement of Principles and Code of Practice*.⁵⁹⁶ It set out rules designed to limit the use of corporal punishment including:

It should not be administered for failure or poor performance in a task, even if the failure (e.g., errors in spelling or calculation, bad homework, bad handwriting, etc.) appears to be due not to lack of ability or any other kind of handicap but to inattention, carelessness or laziness. Failure of this type may be more an educational and social problem than a disciplinary one and may require remedial rather than corrective action.

Corporal punishment should not be inflicted for truancy or lateness unless the head teacher is satisfied that the child and not the parent is at fault.

Where used, corporal punishment should be used only as a last resort and should be directed to punishment of the wrong-doer and to securing the conditions necessary for order in the school and for work in the classroom.

It should normally follow previous clear warning about the consequences of a repetition of misconduct.

Corporal punishment should be given by striking the palm of the pupil's hand with a strap and by no other means whatever.⁵⁹⁷

The Secretary of State for Scotland welcomed the issue of this booklet. The thinking as to what was acceptable even in the school setting had begun to shift significantly.

Further developments

In 1977 the Pack Committee, chaired by Professor D.C. Pack, and set up by the Secretary of State for Scotland, reported on

594 Approved Schools (Scotland) Rules (1961), rule 31, at LEG.001.001.2696, pp.9-10.

595 See for example [Transcript, day 220](#): Kenneth Chapelle (former pupil, 1961-6), at TRN-8-000000011, p.74.

596 See Corporation of Glasgow, Education Department, Meeting of Schools and School Welfare Sub-Committee, 6 May 1968, at GLA.001.001.0703. The booklet was sent to all education authorities in February 1968.

597 Liaison Committee on Educational Matters, *Elimination of Corporal Punishment in Schools: Statement of Principles and Code of Practice*, February 1968, at GLA.001.001.0706.

indiscipline and truancy in Scottish schools. It reported 'corporal punishment should, as was envisaged in 1968, disappear by a process of gradual elimination rather than by legislation'.⁵⁹⁸

A working group appointed by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities reviewed that process and produced a report entitled *Discipline in Scottish Schools* in 1981. The Secretary of State for Scotland considered the report and concluded, in a letter of 9 February 1982, 'that the way is now open for progress leading to the elimination of corporal punishment in Scottish schools within the foreseeable future'.⁵⁹⁹

The case of *Campbell and Cosans v UK*⁶⁰⁰ was held just three weeks after the Secretary of State's conclusions. In its decision, the European Court of Human Rights, while rejecting an argument that the use of corporal punishment in Scottish schools was contrary to Article 3, 'found the United Kingdom in breach of Article 2 Protocol 1 for failing to respect the parents' philosophical conviction against corporal punishment. The Government ... considered it impractical to prohibit corporal punishment only of children whose parents objected, and so instead, all pupils at public schools were granted protection from corporal punishment by their teachers.'⁶⁰¹

Consequently, section 48 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 introduced a new section 48A to the Education Act (Scotland) 1980 which came into force on 15 August 1987 and abolished corporal punishment for

some pupils. Section 48A(5)(a) provided that a 'pupil' included a person for whom education was provided at

- (i) a public school,
- (ii) a grant-aided school, or
- (iii) an independent school, maintained or assisted by a Minister of the Crown, which is a school prescribed by regulations made under this section or falls within a category of schools so prescribed.

Although the legislation did not apply to independent schools, specific provision was made to prescribe Queen Victoria School at Dunblane, funded by the Ministry of Defence, under section 48A(5)(iii) on 15 August 1987.⁶⁰²

In general guidance, issued by the Scottish Education Department on 17 June 1987, corporal punishment was defined as 'any act which could constitute an assault. This covers any intentional application of force as punishment and includes not only the use of the cane or the tawse, but also other forms of physical chastisement, e.g., slapping, throwing missiles such as chalk, and rough handling.'⁶⁰³

Other than in the case of Queen Victoria School, the legislation did not prevent boarding schools from continuing with corporal punishment, although that would have led to a two-tier approach given the prohibition of its use for pupils on assisted places. However, consistent with the change in society, many independent boarding schools, as well as day schools, were either thinking of or had already abolished it.

598 Scottish Council of Independent Schools, *Corporal Punishment in Scottish Schools*, at SCI-000000009, p.2.

599 Scottish Council of Independent Schools, *Corporal Punishment Abolition in Scotland – Timeline*, at SCI-000000007, p.1.

600 *Campbell and Cosans v United Kingdom* (1982) 4 EHRR 293.

601 Kenneth McK. Norrie, Report to SCAI, [Legislative Background to the Treatment of Children and Young People Living Apart from their Parents](#) (November 2017), p.354.

602 The Education (Abolition of Corporal Punishment: Prescription of Schools) (Scotland) Order 1987.

603 Scottish Council of Independent Schools, *Corporal Punishment Files*, at SCI-000000023, p.8.

The Independent Schools Information Service (Scotland), the forerunner to the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), surveyed its members in 1984 and found that 36 no longer had corporal punishment while 24 retained it, although half of them were considering abolition. Looking to the schools in the case study, only Fettes Prep School had stopped using corporal punishment. Keil, Loretto Junior School, Merchiston, Morrison's, and Queen Victoria School retained it although were contemplating abolition, while Loretto senior school and Gordonstoun were not. The Edinburgh Academy did not feature in that survey.⁶⁰⁴

A similar survey in October 1988 revealed that only five prep schools and two senior schools retained corporal punishment, though four either had unofficially abolished it or were phasing it out. That included The Edinburgh Academy. The only senior school to retain it was Loretto,⁶⁰⁵ although by 1991 a further SCIS survey confirmed that it was no longer used by any of its member schools.⁶⁰⁶ Loretto, it appears, had stopped the use of the cane in 1990.⁶⁰⁷

Finally, section 16 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 extended the prohibition against corporal punishment to all schools and repealed section 48A of the 1980 Act.

604 Independent Schools Information Service (Scotland), at SCI-000000038.

605 Independent Schools Information Service (Scotland), at SCI-000000039.

606 Scottish Council of Independent Schools, at SCI-000000025.

607 Loretto School, note on a comparison of witness observations/recommendations with Loretto School today, at LOR-000000771, p.6.

Appendix C - Inspection reports relating to Morrison's Academy

Table 9: HMIs inspections, 1999-2009

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
<p>26 October 1999</p>	<p>'It evaluated the quality of resources provided, how well pupils were cared for, the support provided for their learning and development and how well residential provision was managed.'⁶⁰⁸</p> <p>'HM inspectors surveyed the views of staff and pupils and interviewed a sample of both.'⁶⁰⁹ They also took part in meetings, reviewed policies and other relevant documents, and inspected accommodation and facilities provided by the school.</p>	<p>'There are two boarding houses, Academy House for boys and Dalmhor House for girls. At the time of the inspection there were 58 resident pupils, 23 of whom were girls.'⁶¹⁰</p> <p>'In responding to the pupil questionnaire or in interviews most pupils felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they were safe and well cared for; - they had enough space and time for supervised study; and - their parents could contact house staff easily. <p>Most pupils had reservations about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the quality and choice of food; and - the range of activities available at the weekends or in the evenings.'⁶¹¹ <p>'Pupils were generally well behaved and caring towards each other. Older pupils looked after young ones. No incidents of bullying had been reported ... Staff worked hard to ensure the personal safety of pupils ... Overall, the boarding houses provided a secure and safe community.'⁶¹²</p>

608 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.2.

609 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.2.

610 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.2.

611 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.2.

612 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.3.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
26 October 1999		<p>'The good level of staffing helped to ensure effective care and supervision of pupils. House staff showed appropriate concern for the physical wellbeing and safety of pupils. They were well supported by hard-working ancillary staff. All staff had undergone security checks before appointment.'⁶¹³</p> <p>'The quality of pastoral care for pupils was good. Most residential pupils were confident that they could approach a member of staff who knew them well for support and advice.'⁶¹⁴</p> <p>'In the three years since his appointment, the rector had provided very effective leadership. He had taken an active personal interest in arrangements for the care and welfare of residential pupils and had made a very positive impact on the quality of provision.'⁶¹⁵</p> <p>'Some house staff had undertaken training on child protection and on other issues relevant to the welfare of young people. Further training should now be provided for all house staff.'⁶¹⁶</p> <p>'The boarding handbook, recently produced in consultation with house staff, contained an appropriate range of draft policies which linked well to the school aims. These policies covered aspects of child protection, care and welfare and a clear complaints procedure.'⁶¹⁷</p>

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613 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

614 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

615 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

616 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

617 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
26 October 1999		<p>'Good use had been made of national advice in HM Inspectors of Schools' publication <i>Improving the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils</i>. Staff were beginning to evaluate more closely the quality of care and welfare in the houses.'⁶¹⁸</p> <p>School's strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the commitment of house staff to the care and welfare of pupils; - the safety and security of boarding houses accommodation; - very good communication with parents; - the commitment and leadership of the rector; - the very high quality of medical care of pupils; and - the school's commitment to self-evaluation and improvement, including the use of performance indicators.⁶¹⁹ <p>Points for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils should be provided with better opportunities for personal and social development through being given a wider range of responsibilities. - The school should continue to improve the links between house and school staff. In particular, school guidance staff should build on the good start which has been made in taking a more direct interest in the welfare and progress of their boarding pupils. - The school should ensure full implementation of policies outlined in the new handbook for boarding staff, including the well-documented complaints procedures.

618 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.4.

619 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.5.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
26 October 1999		- House staff should be provided with a structured programme of staff development linked to self-evaluation and including consideration of child protection procedures. ⁶²⁰
28 August 2001	Follow up to the 1999 inspection of the care and welfare of residential pupils.	<p>'1. Pupils should be provided with better opportunities for personal and social development through being given a wider range of responsibilities. This recommendation had been very well met.'⁶²¹</p> <p>'2. The school should continue to improve the links between house and school staff. In particular, school guidance staff should build on the good start which has been made in taking a more direct interest in the welfare and progress of their boarding pupils. The school had made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.'⁶²²</p> <p>'3. The school should ensure full implementation of policies outlined in the new handbook for boarding staff, including the well-documented complaints procedures. This recommendation had been addressed effectively.'⁶²³</p> <p>'4. House staff should be provided with a structured programme of staff development linked to self-evaluation and including consideration of child protection procedures. The school had made good progress towards meeting this recommendation ... Boarding staff had recently received training in child protection and had a good understanding of procedures.'⁶²⁴</p>

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620 HMIs, Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 26 October 1999, at MOR-000000030, p.5.

621 HMle, Follow-up to the Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 28 August 2001, at MOR-000000031, p.2. See also SGV-000006512 and SGV-000000757.

622 HMle, Follow-up to the Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 28 August 2001, at MOR-000000031, p.2. See also SGV-000006512.

623 HMle, Follow-up to the Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 28 August 2001, at MOR-000000031, p.3. See also SGV-000006512.

624 HMle, Follow-up to the Inspection of the Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 28 August 2001, at MOR-000000031, pp.2-3. See also SGV-000006512.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
22 March 2005	<p>'The inspection of Morrison's Academy took place in November 2004 as part of a pilot programme of integrated inspections of residential schools by HM Inspectorate of Education and the Care Commission ... prior to the commencement of integrated inspection under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 on 1 April 2005 ... The inspection covered key aspects of the school's residential provision, including the environment, care and protection, support for pupils, and management. As part of the inspection process,⁶²⁵ they issued questionnaires to pupils, their parents or carers, and care and teaching staff. They took account of the views of pupils, managers, teachers and care staff.'</p>	<p>At the time of the inspection there were 47 boarders - 29 boys and 18 girls.</p> <p>Key strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The positive climate and welcoming environment where pupils feel well cared for and secure. - The commitment and teamwork of staff and the very good communication between residential and school staff. - Relationships between staff and pupils. - Pupils' behaviour and courtesy and their very good support to one another. - The effective input from teachers for English as an additional language. - The quality of support for personal and social development, and from the school nurse.⁶²⁶ <p>'Appropriate arrangements were in place for child protection and to prevent bullying. Teaching and non-teaching staff were familiar with the child protection policy and how to implement these procedures. Childline posters were publicly displayed near the telephones. Staff had developed appropriate methods to record any accidents or incidents, including incidents of bullying. Further training in child protection and supporting pupils who feel vulnerable should be provided for all house staff and prefects.'⁶²⁷</p>

625 HMIE and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.1.

626 HMIE and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.2

627 HMIE and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.4.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
22 March 2005		<p>'The rector, who had been in post for just three months, provided good leadership. He had shown commitment to the continuous improvement of the school and was respected by pupils, parents and staff. He took an active personal interest in all aspects of boarding life. The rector and head of boarding worked well together as a team to plan and develop provision for effective care and welfare arrangements for boarding pupils. The head of boarding had developed and implemented effective policies and procedures for the care and welfare of residential pupils in the fifteen months he had been in post. He had been successful in building good communications between school and boarding staff and had a clear view of priorities for development.'⁶²⁸</p> <p>'The school used safe recruitment practices in its appointment of staff. All staff had significant experience of working with young people, often in a residential setting, and some had professional qualifications and additional certificated training relating to the care and welfare of pupils. The head of boarding had recently introduced job descriptions, a formal induction procedure and planned training for boarding staff. However, residential staff had not yet had their work reviewed under the school's scheme for staff review and development.'⁶²⁹</p>

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628 HMle and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.6.

629 HMle and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.6.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
22 March 2005		<p>Main points for action:</p> <p>'The school and Board of Governors should act on the following recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school should continue to develop communication with parents and carers, especially those for whom English is not their first language. - The school should continue with the programme for refurbishment and upgrading of residential accommodation ... - Staff should build on pupil responsibilities and increase their involvement in decision making on the day-to-day aspects of residential provision. - More systematic procedures should be introduced to evaluate and further improve the residential provision.'⁶³⁰ <p>'The school and the Board of Governors have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers. The Care Commission Officers will commence statutory six-monthly inspections of the school from April 2005.'</p>
20 May 2009	Quality of education at the school.	The school roll was 540 pupils, all of which day pupils. ⁶³¹

630 HMle and Care Commission, Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 22 March 2005, at CIS-000000251, p.7.

631 HMle, Morrison's Academy and Nursery Class, Crieff, 20 May 2009, at SGV-000007185.

Table 10: Care Commission inspections, 2006-7

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
<p>20 November 2006</p>	<p>Unannounced inspection.</p> <p>'The focus of the inspection was on following up main points for action and other issues identified within the integrated inspection report ... The Care Commission Officer ... reported on action under the following National Care Standards for School Care Accommodation:</p> <p>Standard 5. Comfort, safety and security</p> <p>Standard 7. Management and staffing</p> <p>Standard 9. Exercising your rights'⁶³²</p>	<p>National Care Standard 5: areas for development:</p> <p>'While the male head of boarding was accessible at all times as his family lived in adjoining premises, there was a technical fault in the arrangement for girls to contact the housemistress directly by phone to her cottage at the rear of Dalmhor; consequently girls needed to go for assistance in person during the night. This telephone fault should be rectified as a matter of urgency.'⁶³³</p> <p>National Care Standard 7: areas for development:</p> <p>'Pupils were not aware of the National Care Standards and those interviewed had not seen the last inspection report, though copies were circulated by HMle to all parents.'⁶³⁴</p> <p>National Care Standard 9: areas for development:</p> <p>'Pupils continued to feel that there was insufficient choice of social activities at the weekend. While taking into account constraints of staffing and parental funding, efforts should be coordinated to ensure there are periodic organised social activities, this being an important aspect of the traditional boarding experience. Given the value pupils place on regular meetings, these should be facilitated and not necessarily require the presence of the head of boarding, as chairing and minuting meetings, however informal, is good leadership experience and ensures accountability.'⁶³⁵</p>

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632 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.3.

633 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.5.

634 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.6.

635 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.7.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
20 November 2006		<p>Requirements: 'The telephone link between the girls' floor and the housemistress must be rectified, with a suitable contingency in the interim. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114 regulation 4(1)(a) – a duty to make proper provision for the health and welfare of pupils. Timescale for implementation: within a month of publication of this report.'⁶³⁶</p> <p>Recommendations: 'A copy of the National Care Standards should be publicly available, such as on a notice-board, for access at all times. A copy of this published report should also be similarly posted up for pupils to read at any time. National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation Services. Standard 17. Concerns, comments and complaints.'⁶³⁷</p>
15 June 2007	<p>Announced.</p> <p>'During inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including: A review of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation, discussion with a range of staff, and interview with a group of three pupils.'</p> <p>'Focus areas were child protection and SSSC codes and staff training.'</p>	<p>National Care Standard 3: School Care Accommodation Services – Care and Protection.</p> <p>'Morrison's Academy's child protection and confidentiality policy, based on the Scottish Council of Independent Schools' (SCIS) guidelines, took account of a range of relevant national and local guidance. The school also had a copy of Perth and Kinross Council's local child protection committee inter-agency guidelines. During the last year, school staff had undertaken child protection training twice, an internal one to update staff on recent developments and the other, with an external speaker, focussed on trips out of school. Child protection also formed part of the induction agenda for working lunches for new staff each session. Some staff, such as the school nurse who attended SCIS training for matrons and nurses, had additional opportunities to access related training ... The school's Child Protection</p>

636 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.8.

637 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 20 November 2006, at CIS-000000253, p.8.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
		Coordinator was also a member of the Perth and Kinross Independent Schools Child Protection Group, which provided a helpful forum for keeping abreast of new developments. ⁶³⁸
15 June 2007		<p>Areas for development:</p> <p>'The child protection policy did not include the actual telephone contact numbers for police and the child protection team (or the new National Child Protection Helpline). Readers of the policy did not have knowledge of other useful reference documents, such as Perth and Kinross' guidelines. The pupil and parent handbooks did not contain a synopsis of the child protection policy, as stated in the staff handbook, to ensure they were aware of the school's responsibilities in this area.'⁶³⁹</p> <p>'The school generally did not have an awareness of the national reform programme Protecting Children and Young People: Children's Charter and Framework for Standards (Scottish Executive (SE) 2004). The latter are also cited in related guidance, namely: a pocketbook Safe and Well: Good Practice in Schools and Education (SE 2005) and How Well are Children and Young People Protected and their Needs Met (HMIE 2005), a self-evaluation tool using quality indicators.'⁶⁴⁰</p> <p>National Care Standard 7: School Care Accommodation Services - Management and Staffing.</p> <p>Area for development:</p> <p>'The house mistress and other staff were not routinely included in some core training, such as child protection, information being cascaded down to them from the head of boarding.'⁶⁴¹</p>

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638 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.6.

639 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.7.

640 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.7.

641 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison's Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.8.

Date of report	Focus/methodology	Key findings/conclusions
15 June 2007		<p>Requirements: ‘Staff must be appropriately trained for the work they perform. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114 regulation 13 (c) (i) – a requirement to ensure that persons employed in the provision of the care service receive training appropriate to the work they are to perform. Timescale for implementation: – within six months of publication of this report.’⁶⁴²</p> <p>Recommendations: ‘1. Some minor additions should be made to the child protection policy, which should be included in the handbooks for parents and pupils. National Care Standards – School care accommodation services: Standard 3.3: Care and protection. 2. Staff, pupils and parents should be made aware of the Children’s Charter. National Care Standards – School care accommodation services: Standard 3.3: Care and protection. 3. Staff, pupils and parents should be made aware of the Framework for Standards for child protection National Care Standards – School care accommodation services: Standard 3.3: Care and protection.’⁶⁴³</p>

642 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.9.

643 Care Commission, Inspection Report: Morrison’s Academy, Crieff, 15 June 2007, at CIS-000000254, p.9.

Appendix D - Breakdown of numbers of children at Morrison's Academy

Table 11: Pupil roll: number of admissions, 1930-79

Year of admission	Boys	Girls	Total
1930-1	39		39
1931-2	39		39
1932-3	38		38
1933-4	41		41
1934-5	43		43
1935-6	34		34
1936-7	47		47
1937-8	52		52
1938-9	46		46
1939-40	130		130
1940-1	94		94
1941-2	64		64
1942-3	49		49
1943-4	54	49	103
1944-5	44	70	114
1945-6	67	93	160
1946-7	93	119	212
1947-8	83	101	184
1948-9	64	80	144
1949-50	59	82	141
1950-1	70	89	159
1951-2	72	86	158
1952-3	79	97	176
1953-4	83	83	166
1954-5	63	96	159

Year of admission	Boys	Girls	Total
1955-6	73	77	150
1956-7	76	83	159
1957-8	78	82	160
1958-9	71	87	158
1959-60	77	90	167
1960-1	75	85	160
1961-2	75	80	155
1962-3	71	105	176
1963-4	77	57	134
1964-5	67	82	149
1965-6	73	77	150
1966-7	81	87	168
1967-8	76	93	169
1968-9	71	88	159
1969-70	84	81	165
1970-1	74	71	145
1971-2	76	78	154
1972-3	96	108	204
1973-4	90	122	212
1974-5	105	117	222
1975-6	90	122	212
1976-7	101	118	219
1977-8	83	94	177
1978-9	83	118	201
Total	3470	3247	6717

Table 12: Pupil roll: number of admissions, 1979-2001

Year	Total admissions	Year	Total admissions
1979-80	145	1990-1	168
1980-1	148	1991-2	164
1981-2	133	1992-3	117
1982-3	159	1993-4	114
1983-4	166	1994-5	123
1984-5	163	1995-6	103
1985-6	168	1996-7	164
1986-7	173	1997-8	127
1987-8	145	1998-9	78
1988-9	123	1999-2000	106
1989-90	140	2000-1	86

Table 13: School numbers from census week, w/c 18 September 2006⁶⁴⁴

	Primary	Secondary	Total
Boys	95	178	273
Girls	79	142	221

644 See SGV-000067114 and 67116. Of the total number of pupils, 16 were boarders.

Appendix E - Number of complaints, civil actions, police investigations, criminal proceedings, and applicants to SCAI

Number of complaints made to Morrison's Academy a) against staff b) against pupils	a) 2 b) 1
Number of civil actions raised against Morrison's Academy relating to abuse or alleged abuse	0
Number of police investigations relating to abuse or alleged abuse at Morrison's Academy of which the school was aware as of 30 October 2020 a) against staff b) against pupils	a) 1 b) 0
Number of criminal proceedings resulting in conviction relating to abuse at Morrison's Academy of which the school was aware as of 30 October 2020	0
Number of applicants to SCAI relating to Morrison's Academy	20

Photo credits

p.2 Morrison's Academy; p.5 *Business Insider*; p.43 National Museums Scotland. All other photos Morrison's Academy archive.

