

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IZV

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is IZV My date of birth is 1965. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before School

2. My mother and father were and I have an older brother I was brought up in Winchmore Hill in North London. I had a perfectly happy family background. There was nothing irregular about it.

Keble Preparatory School, North London

3. I attended Keble Preparatory School in Winchmore Hill, North London. This was my local school and I could walk to it. My parent's would have sent me there because it was a local private school, which satisfied the slightly snobbish class thing of old. Keble was a day preparatory school for boys only.
4. There was one class per age year and nine age years. I seem to recall there were 27 boys in my class, so around 243 pupils at the school in total.
5. I started at Keble School in 1969, when I was four years old. I was there until I was thirteen, finishing in 1978.

6. I was the youngest in my class. I would say I was happy at school. It was incredibly Victorian in its discipline. It was strict and there was a lot of physical punishment. I think I was caned when I was eleven.
7. When I started at the school, there was a head mistress who had been there forever. She looked like she was out of an Alistair Sim movie and ruled the place with fear. Her name was Swinburne. The head master who took over, probably halfway through my time there, was called Derek Watkins.
8. There was an atmosphere of fear at the school although I would say it was still a happy time. It just was what it was, a London day school thinking it was a proper public school.
9. I was at school from 9:00 am until around 3:30 pm when I would go home.
10. There was mixed staff at the school. It tended to be male teachers who taught the older children. When you were forming letters and learning to read and write it was all female teachers. That would have been up until you were eight or nine years old. Then you would meet your first male teachers. There was a female French teacher who taught older kids but all the other teachers were male at that stage.
11. One of the male teachers I remember was Derek Jones. I think he may have been there when I started at Keble. I wouldn't have necessarily noticed him when I started at the school and in my early years. Derek Jones taught English.
12. I didn't know anything about Derek Jones at that time. He didn't really present as anything very much. He was a form teacher and an English teacher. I remember very often had a box camera on a strap around his neck as he was going around the school. Nevertheless, it was nothing untoward, he was a photographer and that seemed to be his hobby. There was nothing suspicious about it at all.

13. Derek Jones was the only English teacher so I guess he would have started teaching me once I was out my initial learning phase, when I was nine or ten. He would have taught my entire class of 27 boys. I'd say he was quite fun as a teacher.
14. I was good academically. I was literally top of everything by that stage. I was also very naughty at the same time, I could be because I could do the work.
15. Jones wasn't one of those Robin William type teachers we saw in the movie Dead Poet's Society, the type of teacher who changed your life. He was just a good solid teacher. He wasn't physically abusive to anyone. There were times he may have shouted a lot but I don't remember him ever striking anyone.
16. I think he was deputy head at one stage so perhaps he would have had a more roaming brief at that time. He didn't teach photography, he was just a guy with a camera. He would also carry out playground duties at break time, probably as part of a rota. However, there was nothing untoward about his actions or movements as I recall.
17. Although Derek Jones walked around the school with a camera, I was never suspicious of this or recall seeing him anywhere near the showers or changing rooms at Keble.
18. When I got to the age of twelve, my last year at Keble School, there were four of us who received scholarships. You had to do a common entrance test to get into your next posh school. The four of us took the entrance exam early and received scholarships to go to senior school.
19. What that meant was from the January to June of our final year at Keble, the four of us had no work to do. We had no exams to pass as we had already secured our place in senior school. For some teachers this was great. We were able to carry out more experiments and things, just the four of us in class. We were still taught by our regular teachers.

20. I eventually moved on to Highgate School, which is a school also in North London. That was another fee-paying day school.

Abuse at Keble Preparatory School

21. In terms of physical abuse as we call it now, teachers would hit us with a green flash tennis shoe, there was a lot of that going on. That would be for things like talking in class or chatting in line.
22. You would also get those hard chalkboard dusters thrown at you.
23. There was one teacher I recall, her trick was to pull your hair and then yank the seat away so you fell but were caught by the hair. Her name was [REDACTED]
24. There was a gym teacher who would humiliate you if you were academically good. He would ask us who came top of the French class then get that person to stand on top of the vaulting horse and sing the French national anthem in French.
25. Another friend of mine had to sit inside the vaulting box for an entire lesson for talking. The class would all be leaping over it.
26. That same gym teacher once ran down the gym and kicked me up the backside. I just walked out and went home. I was aged nine at the time. It's probably worth saying there was a culture in the place. There was an air of weirdness.
27. There was an incredibly old teacher named Mr [REDACTED]. He was notorious amongst the kids. It was 'nudge nudge, wink wink' but we didn't really know what any of it meant. He would take very young boys, with their parent's permission, onto his canal boat for weekends. It was known he would feed the boys strawberries. I remember us all thinking that was weird. Letting your child go off with this teacher at the age of eight or nine was also pretty weird. I don't know if Mr [REDACTED] ever abused the children though.

28. I had no issue with Derek Jones until the sexual abuse. In April 1978, the school organised a boat trip to the Norfolk Broads. There were six boys aged between twelve and thirteen on each boat along with two adults. There were maybe three boats in total and the trip lasted for one week.
29. I was on a boat with Derek Jones, five other boys and a father whose name I don't recall. I recall that the father and possibly his son slept in the rear cabin of the boat. There were another four boys who slept in the middle cabin of the boat. I don't recall if we drew lots, I was probably just chosen, but Derek Jones and I slept at the front, at the pointed end. We were in separate bunks.
30. I couldn't tell you what day of the trip it was, probably early on. Derek Jones invited me and one of the other boys to the front cabin. The other boy had in fact been my closest friend but we had a massive falling out the year before and didn't speak. I did know that Jones had become a friend of my former friend's family and that he went round to theirs for supper and drinks. So he knew this boy very well. He didn't know me as well.
31. He invited that boy to join us in his bunk or berth. That would have been after supper I guess. I didn't know what was happening across the rest of the boat.
32. My former friend and I sat on one bunk. Jones was on the other. He then got out a magazine, which showed hard-core child pornography. I remember vividly the first thing he showed us was a photo featuring a young girl.
33. He then started flicking through the magazine and asking us inappropriate questions. He made us get involved. Almost like it was a bit of schoolwork, analysing the picture.
34. After a time he put the magazine away. He had two magazines actually. He then asked the other boy if he wanted to stay. The boy said no he was okay and he left. The boy couldn't have been in the other end with the father because nothing was said. He must have been one of the four boys in the middle of the boat.

35. Jones then started asking me about masturbation. Things like do I masturbate? Do I ejaculate when I masturbate? Would I like to masturbate with him? Would I like to see how he does it?
36. He then stripped off his top and dropped his trousers to below the knees. He then pulled my trousers and pants down and commented on my notable erection. He started masturbating me. He asked me if I was comfortable with that and I said no. He said that it was no problem, that we could do it simultaneously.
37. He proceeded to masturbate himself furiously until he ejaculated on his chest. He rubbed it in and showed me. I went along with him, pretending I was masturbating. I made some grunting noises and that was that.
38. Jones spoke about it being our secret. He said that he wanted me to be clear that there was a difference between curiosity and homosexuality and that lots of people didn't understand. I expect in those days he probably thought it was shameful to be thought of as gay. He told me how much I had to be proud of for a twelve-year-old boy.
39. The father of one of the children would have been at the other end of the boat at the time Jones did this.
40. That was it. I was there for the remainder of the holiday and nothing was mentioned. I think because my friend and I had had this massive falling out a year before we didn't talk about it. Even although there were only four of us in the class at school we just didn't talk and so didn't have the conversation about Jones.
41. There was a rumour but I can't remember if it was before or after this trip, that he had told his parents about an incident involving Derek Jones. I recall hearing that his father was ready to go round and knock seven bells out of Jones however had been stopped by his wife.

42. I hadn't been aware of any rumours involving Jones or that I should be wary of him, nothing at all.
43. After the incident, I didn't feel able to tell anyone about what had happened.
44. Another sexualised thing I remember was over the Christmas after we found out we had been accepted into our senior schools two terms early. We had been allowed to decorate our classroom. The friend I was no longer friendly with, in classic twelve/thirteen-year-old boy style, did two round balloons with one long balloon with tinsel hanging out the end and a pair of hands holding on to it. I remember Jones saying that he did it using only one hand. We didn't really know what he meant at that stage.
45. There was another time, I was surprised to see it was after the incident on the boat on the Norfolk Broads. It was May 1978. I remember being in Jones' flat or terraced house in [REDACTED] Palmers Green. I remember going round there with my parents and them having a drink or cup of tea, whatever it was.
46. Actually, from this diary I see I was there two hours before my parents. I'm not sure why this was, maybe for tuition, I don't recall.
47. I remember Jones showing me his record collection and the album he pulled out was Jimi Hendrix, Electric Ladyland. It was a double-sided cover, which showed forty naked women. It had been controversial at the time. I remember we were sitting on the floor by the fire and my parents were up at the table having a cup of tea. Jones was talking me through the album cover of forty naked women. He was going into detail, a bit like he had that time on the boat. I remember him saying that he could tell the women didn't wear bras or that they had taken their bras off ages before because they had no marks.
48. With my parents sitting there and their twelve-year-old boy being shown this, it sort of felt like a closed loop.

49. I think we were only there because we were going our separate ways, my brother had left the school two years before, I was leaving on a scholarship and he had taught me. I think it was just a goodbye and thanks.

Reporting Abuse at Keble Preparatory School, London

50. I told my parents about the gym teacher kicking me up the backside at the time. They were shocked and sympathetic but wouldn't report it because this was the thing that they had given me, the gift of a paid for education I think. In those days, I think there was such deference to professions that they wouldn't have wanted to stir anything up.

Life after School

51. I went to university then did a number of temporary jobs for a year. I then got a job in PR for a year but I hated it and quit. I got another job in PR, which I also did for one year. I was the office junior but became involved in music and with some famous bands. That was more fun but I still didn't like it. The company also did a bit of PR for a television company. Then I saw an advertisement for a researcher for a different television company. I'd always liked television so I went for an interview. They told me I couldn't do research but that I could do some PR for a few weeks while their new show was starting.
52. A couple of weeks turned into a month and I've been there ever since. That was thirty-two years ago. I've been there continuously since July 1990. I did publicity for the first few years, then policy and research, then moved on and have produced a few things.
53. From about 95/96, I've been working on new ideas. I run the development teams. It's a stressful job and hard work but it's good.

54. It's incidental but I was reminded of what happened at Keble about eighteen months ago. There was a story in the Mail and I recognised the image of a man. His name was Peter Wells and he was one of the teachers at Keble when I was there. He taught sports and I think Geography. He was imprisoned for around twelve years about four or five years ago. This story in the Mail was about a man who had waved his anonymity. He had a famous father in show business and he himself worked in television in the States. He waved his anonymity to say that Peter Wells from Keble had abused him and a few other boys there.
55. I made contact with him and told him I had been at Keble. Peter Wells actually overlapped with Derek Jones by two years and I do remember him. He hung around the showers a lot and was always thought of as a rogue.
56. The guy who waved his anonymity in the Mail came over to England to see Wells being sentenced. Wells had another two or three years added to his sentence. That incident was ten years after I had left Keble but Wells and Jones did overlap.
57. I believe there were rumours of things going on between Mr [REDACTED] the old guy who was handing out strawberries, and also rumours about Peter Wells. I heard no suspicion or rumours about Jones.
58. I'm not aware of any issues between Jones and the school at the time. As I said my former friend's father was reportedly going round to beat him up before being stopped by his wife but I'm not aware of the school having had knowledge of this or any other matters involving Jones.
59. Flash forward ten years and when Peter Wells was reported to the school and board of governors, parents settled for him just going away. The deal he struck with the school was that he would become the official school photographer. He set up a school photography business for preparatory aged schoolboys all over North West London.
60. I've thought back to my mental state at the time and as to why I wouldn't have reported it. Even though I was quite young, I remember feeling sorry for Jones. I just thought

he was such a sad man having had to do that to get his kicks. I think that may have been a minor factor but a factor nonetheless. I was also not sure I would be believed and I don't know that I would have had a clue how to even raise it with my parents and I wouldn't have told any of my friends as it felt like something to be ashamed of.

Impact

61. I don't think the abuse had an impact on my schoolwork. At the time I had been accepted for my next school, so as others were hurtling towards their final exams, I was in the fortunate position of not having to do any work.
62. In retrospect however, I would say that once I was at secondary school the impact of Derek Jones' abuse caused me to have a mistrust of friendships. As I got older, I had a general touch phobia as I was getting to know girls. I think this has had an impact on me throughout my adult life, certainly sexually. Maybe I didn't have quite as many close friendships because of it.
63. I don't think it impacted my relationships with friends massively. I have a good network of friends now although not many I would talk to about this.
64. I didn't do many sports and have never been hugely into the male hugging thing, with close friends yes but contact with others not so much.
65. The abuse I suffered from Derek Jones has always been there in my mind. I have had quite long spells where I would literally think about it every single day. That was all the way through puberty, through everything.

Treatment/support

66. I haven't been for any counselling because of my contact with Derek Jones. However, it has led to me being advised that I should think about having counselling. As yet, I haven't taken this up.
67. I have a therapist friend who had given me some contact numbers for therapists. I have thought about it and was going to progress it but couldn't work out whether to go before or after speaking to the Inquiry.
68. I would like to think I have a fairly good handle on things, at least intellectually. It's just how deep I need to go into it, drag up stuff that I already know.

Reporting of Abuse

69. Peter Wells was quite widely covered in the press. I can't remember whether googling Wells, Keble and abuse led me to Derek Jones or not.
70. I did get in touch with the headmaster at Keble School by email and asked if they had seen the stories about Peter Wells. I asked if the name Derek Jones had come up at all.
71. The headmaster replied to me saying that no other master's names had ever come up. He suggested that I contact the policeman who dealt with Peter Wells.
72. I did contact the policeman involved in the Peter Wells case and we had two or three email exchanges. He said that if Derek Jones was dead the police interest in him would be over. He also said if I wanted to do anything about Jones, I could submit a formal report however, I didn't do that.

73. I thought that it would be easy to find out if Jones was dead or alive. I googled Derek Jones and got to the Aberlour stories where it stated that he had been killed in a car crash in Kenya in 2000 or so.
74. I think at some point after I left Keble, probably fairly soon after, Derek Jones also left. The school have absolutely no record of him. All they could find was one governor who is still alive who was able to pick Jones out in a school photograph. They don't appear to have any records of who their staff were or of any of the school's business from the seventies.
75. I don't know how Jones got from Keble to Aberlour. Entirely my speculation however the common pattern in those days seemed to be that people were moved on to where there was no linkage with anything.
76. The only other thing is probably the general sense of his grooming and the esteem that teachers were held in back then. Jones could go to my former friend's house and have supper. Peter Wells was hired as a tutor to the guy who is now in America.
77. I think there was a lot of press around the Aberlour thing. I also didn't have a hugely satisfactory time contacting Keble who were sympathetic but closing doors at the same time. I did contact the police but if he was dead, there was nothing they could do.
78. I also felt guilt and a responsibility to report it. I could have reported it at the time and all hell could have broken loose. They could have said they paid him off to go somewhere else or moved him on or that he's just disappeared. On the other hand, it could have spared a lot of people, including those in Africa. Just speculation but I can't imagine what he got up to out there. I felt it incumbent upon me to contact the Inquiry and say that I wasn't in care, I wasn't in Scotland but I was in a little day school in London and there is a connection with Derek Jones here.
79. I still have all my school reports from Keble, hand written reports. That is a fifteen-page handwritten record written by each teacher in ink. So five or six years of Derek Jones saying how good I was at English. Beyond that nothing. I think that probably

was all there ever was. I don't know how they kept copies of my reports because I have the original records written in ink. Disciplinary stuff they wouldn't have kept, you got spanked or caned and were sent back to class.

Lessons to be Learned

80. Unquestionably, for schools there has to be a joined up approach to information sharing. A bit like before there was a national crime network between police forces. Schools have to have a clickable database between them, surely. There should be severe sanctions if you give a glowing reference to someone who has been reported to you as an abuser.
81. Beyond that, it is a societal thing. Creating an atmosphere where children feel able to report abuse without shame. At age twelve, children do not necessarily have the emotional intelligence or articulacy to put it into words. I think that for a period I thought it was everybody's experience or at least the majority. I just thought we all had a secret we kept to ourselves. There was a sense of shame associated with it, if you volunteered that information to someone, you could be 'othered'.

Hopes for the Inquiry

82. There are specific schools and boards of governors where accusations were clearly made and where they either did not act or came to a compromised deal with parents in an agreement. A deal where someone could become a school photographer and not be told they couldn't teach again. Institutions need to have an overt inquiry to reassert that these institutions, even although the personnel has changed over generations, do have some responsibility for that.
83. I think also, bringing reassurance to people who have been through this experience. Some will have had a far worse life than me and suffered more than a one off incident. They may find reassurance through the Inquiry and its findings.

84. I think generally an admission and acknowledgment by everyone of what the world was like then. These schools were ridiculously homophobic, racist environments. Teachers would point out and call Jewish kids, Jew. Underneath it all was this very prevalent undertone of sexual abuse.
85. At Highgate School where I went after Keble, a teacher ended up doing time, another left in a hurry. It was part of the culture and not something you were aware grownups talked about, certainly not something you talked to them about.
86. Like the Windrush scandal, I think it requires a common national acknowledgement of a dark theme in the past. That would be cleansing.

Other information

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

Signed 

Dated 06/10/2022