

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Evelyn Joyce SMITH

Support person present: No

1. My name is Evelyn Smith although usually referred to as Lyn. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. My qualifications and employment history is as follows:

1973 - 1977 BEd (Hons) - Dunfermline College of Physical Education

1982 - 1985 BA (Ord) - Open University

1993 - 1995 PGC Guidance - Northern College

2000 - 2003 MEd - Open University

September 1977 - 1987 Laurel Bank School, Glasgow

September 1987 - April 2002 - Strathallan School, Forgandenny

April 2002 - June 2005 - Queen Victoria School, Dunblane (suspended October 2004 and never returned)

June 2005 - October 2007 (volunteer for about 18 months one day a week at Strathcarron Hospice)

October 2007 - September 2014 Clifton Hall School, Edinburgh part time teacher of PE

Employment with Queen Victoria school

My employment

3. I was employed at Queen Victoria School from April 2002 until June 2005 although I was suspended from my role in October 2004 and never returned. In my role as assistant head teacher (AHT), my responsibilities included school child protection co-ordinator; quality assurance manager in connection with HMI welfare inspections - acting as the pastoral co-ordinator throughout the school; monitoring and evaluating welfare provision in the houses; working closely with, advising and supporting housemasters/housemistresses; maintaining good links with house staff, matrons and hospital sister; working in close conjunction with the deputy headmaster on the day to day discipline of the school and with housemasters/mistresses, teaching staff, especially principal teachers, boarding staff, hospital sister, monitors and prefects.
4. I was also responsible for the delivery of in-service training to boarding staff on pastoral issues as required; the maintenance of a personal and social education programme within the curriculum with responsibility for its organisation; writing and updating with the headmaster the school pastoral handbooks; line manager for the director of careers and support for learning; liaison with Forth Valley Enterprise Business Partnership (EBP); responsible for the hobbies programme - planning, co-ordination and arranging, liaising with staff, supervising and monitoring the programme; link with parents on all pastoral matters and ensure that the relevant information and progress concerning individual pupils is communicated to parents and appropriate staff.
5. I managed the tutor system and support for tutors in their pastoral duties; overall management and care of those pupils identified as having behavioural or social problems in conjunction with boarding staff, hospital sister, learning support external agencies, where appropriate, and parents; the overall direction of the system of reporting to parents including academic progress, plus proof read all termly reports, personal and social development, contribution to non-academic activities; be on call out-with the normal school day and be on duty one in three weekends and stand in for the headmaster during occasional holiday periods.

Recruitment process

6. I applied for the assistant head teacher post at Queen Victoria school, which was advertised, by completing form QVS Form APP1 Rev 9/99 on 12 October 2001 attaching a covering letter and full CV. I was interviewed on 20 November by the headmaster, deputy headmaster and a member of the board of commissioners. Prior to this interview I was shown round the school by the current assistant head teacher and was able to view the possible housing properties. I was offered the post by telephone on 21 November and then by letter dated same and accepted by letter dated same. I completed a Disclosure Scotland Form before taking up the post.

Line Manager

7. My line manager in the post of assistant head teacher was the headmaster himself. I would see him daily and often more than once a day. I would also see him along with the rest of the senior management team (SMT) once a week and with housemasters/mistresses once a week.

Training

8. I met with the incumbent assistant head teacher on 30 January 2002 to go over the job including seeing the Personal and Social Education (PSE) handbook she had prepared plus all PSE resources. On 12 March 2002 I again met with the AHT in the evening to go round the boarding houses. At the start of school term I did briefings to the whole staff. On 14 November 2002 I undertook training on leadership and developing people by Defence Management Training. On 8/9 September 2003 I was trained in equality and diversity for managers, on 10/11 October 2003 discipline and restoring efficiency, and 29 April 2004 clustering and evidence based assessment, all provided by DB Learning.

Policy

9. When at Queen Victoria school I had involvement and responsibility for policy in relation to the care, including residential care of children. It was my responsibility to: improve, wherever necessary, the school's welfare provision by continuing to review standards of supervision within the boarding houses thus ensuring good quality care at all times; review consistency of approach across the houses; ensure that welfare targets were included in the school development (later management) and corporate plans; continue to monitor the effectiveness of the provision made for pupils welfare; continue to development planning and target setting in boarding houses; develop and review the programme for all staff responsible for the welfare of pupils; continue to develop the tutor system; to devolve certain aspects of quality assurance on the welfare side to boarding house teams using the new guidelines on standards of care.
10. I also ensured there was a rolling programme of refurbishment for the boarding houses and to review/amend/update school policy documents – namely the corporate plan, school development plan, staff handbook, pastoral staff handbook, child protection guidelines, boarding school arrangements, guide to life in the school community, discipline policy, safety, health, environment and fire action plan and the accessibility strategy plan. I also reviewed house policy handbooks, the pastoral role of the tutor and introduced house development plans
11. Policy booklets were reviewed annually whereas welfare provision was ongoing. The introduction of the house development plans was a new feature. The items which would have been included in the aforementioned policy documents or in MOD handbooks and were areas of interest might be; training, recruitment of staff, child protection, requirement for qualifications, staff appraisal, complaints procedure, discipline and punishment of children, disciplinary process for dealing with complaints and allegations against staff, whistleblowing, and record-keeping.

Strategic Planning

12. I had involvement in strategic planning in the form of contributing along with the headmaster, deputy head and bursar in completing/amending/updating policy documents. A management plan was introduced for 2004/5 and we each had our own component tasks, objectives, target dates and performance indicators to deliver.
13. The potential for abuse featured and was covered in the pastoral staff handbook section on the role of the school in protecting children from abuse.
14. My recollection of the school's strategic approach as far as I remember was that the school management team would work through any recommendations from previous inspections or commissioner visits to produce plans for implementing these.

Other staff

15. In my role as Assistant Head Teacher I managed staff. I was the line manager for the housemasters/mistresses, the careers director and latterly a link for the support for learning department. I was also the second reporting officer for house matrons and housemaids. I met weekly with housemasters/mistresses and was primarily involved helping them with house development plans, welfare issues and training and development requests. I met monthly with house matrons and again my role was aiding with training and development, equality of roles across the houses, mainly to do with laundry.

Recruitment of staff

16. In my role I had involvement in the recruitment of staff at the school and was issued with copies of all applications plus CV's prior to interview. I had no knowledge prior to my first recruitment interview and I made a mistake during that interview by asking a question that upset the interviewee. The female candidate was married and I asked if

her husband would be intending to live with her in the school accommodation which was a flat within the boarding house. I subsequently attended a recruitment practices course organised by DB Learning.

17. I have no knowledge to what extent references were obtained from former employers of applicants, what references were expected to cover and whether referees were actually spoken to, as none of this was in my remit.

Training of staff

18. I was involved in the training and personal development of the whole staff in inappropriate staff/pupil relationships, suicide in young people, management of crises including sudden death, depression in young people and child protection guidelines updates.
19. I trained housemasters/mistresses and residential or senior house tutors in the care standards, the boarding schools association courses for tutors and matrons - qualifications and mentoring their progress and project submissions.

Supervision/staff appraisal/staff evaluation

20. I was not involved in supervision of staff/staff appraisal/staff evaluation. I would have been had I still been there after November 2004 however I was suspended in October 2004. The headmaster used to do all appraisal of staff except those on the SMT, prior to the senior management team being involved. The system changed in November 2004 where there was to be, along with the headmaster and deputy headmaster, a programme of class visits till June 2005 for classroom observation and monitoring. Initially this was to take the form of observing, walking round, looking at jotters, diaries etc. I was to be allocated to the art, science, technical, PE and support for learning departments.

Living arrangements

21. I lived in a school property within the main grounds, next door to the headmaster. This accommodation was away from the main building and well away from all boarding houses. Many staff lived off campus in their own homes. Some lived on The Green which was an area off campus but closely behind the school. In relation to the children there were some residential staff. They were the housemasters/mistresses and their assistants plus matrons who lived in flats within the boarding houses. All staff with house staff permission had access to the children's residential areas

Culture within Queen Victoria school

22. Staff, pupils and parents were exceptionally proud to be associated with this military school and its traditions. The school was often on display to some very high ranking officials and royalty with the pipe band and dancers regularly appearing at international rugby matches and the Edinburgh military tattoo. In my opinion the ceremonial military side ran over into everyday school where there was blind obedience to officialdom e.g. staff would never question a decision by the commissioners (school governors) and would be appalled when anyone did.
23. Similarly pupils often lied to avoid being in serious trouble as they were aware that a suspension/exclusion would mean a black mark on the record of a parent in the military as their commanding officer may be made aware of problems on the home front. The headmaster told me this in my early days at the school in an attempt to help me understand the different nature of this school compared to others I had taught in before. This was held over them by some parents. Pupils would follow the military code of never 'dobbing in' a fellow pupil when being asked about an incident. Some would fear pupil reprisals. I know that in all schools there is an unwritten code about children not 'dobbing in' fellow pupils but there seemed to be a genuine fear resulting in excessive hours being spent by staff trying to get the full facts of incidents.

Fagging

24. The word '*fagging*' to me originates in 'posh' boarding schools where pupils can be asked by those senior to them to carry out chores. There was an element of status involved and a thank you gift would be handed over at the end of a term or year. However nowadays I think we would see doing chores for someone else as an act of enforcement and would treat it as bullying. I rather suspect some instances of getting younger pupils to do chores did exist but have no recollection of having to deal with this on any major scale

Discipline and punishment

25. Enforcing effective discipline was the responsibility of every member of staff. Strategies involved non-verbal warning, verbal warning, isolation, informal talk, formal talk, informal punishment exercise, formal punishment exercise, formal exercise (signed by house staff), referral to principal teacher or referral to housemaster/mistresses or a referral to the assistant head teacher (AHT). This referral could simply be by word of mouth over morning break coffee, being excluded from the class, being sent to the Head of Department, the Housemaster/mistress being notified by conversation or email and similarly to the AHT by word of mouth or by email.
26. A yellow card system was introduced to be issued if pupil progress was poor. Examples of this would be not working in class, not doing homework, disrupting others in class or failing to follow school routines in boarding houses. The referral system follows from teacher to principal teacher to AHT or housemaster/mistresses to AHT.
27. The AHT would interview the pupil and explain the ways they have been falling behind and explain how serious a yellow card is. It was meant to help the pupil focus on behaviour throughout each day and handed to every teacher before the start of each lesson. The yellow card should only have been used when all other disciplinary procedures had been gone through and had not succeeded in motivating the pupil.

Discipline and punishment policy

28. The 'Queen Victoria School Discipline Policy (Draft 3 Feb 02)' was the school's formal policy on discipline and punishment. Each member of staff and department would have a copy of the discipline policy and a copy would be sent to each family of a new pupil. In practice it was intended to apply as detailed above but I found inconsistencies in the decisions staff took and all too often departments were quick to pass on their problem pupils to me. As a result of this and after discussions with heads of department I along with the support for learning department developed a merit system to enable pupils to work to and achieve their potential rather than being punished.

Record keeping of discipline

29. An individual teacher's discipline log book should have been maintained recording date, time and the nature of the offence, the name of the pupil and whatever action was taken. I as AHT kept a note in my planner of every pupil I saw each day and I assumed if reported to housemasters/mistresses they would note on a pupil's file.
30. Senior pupils had some responsibility for discipline. They would ensure pupils did their duties within boarding houses and within the pipe band, Combined Cadet Force and on parade. Their behaviour was supervised by duty members of staff in houses, the pipe major, the drum major, the commander of the CCF and the school sergeant major.

Day to day running of the school

31. On the very odd occasion when both the headmaster and deputy headmaster were out of school then I would become involved in the day to day running of the school. Also at weekends the headmaster, deputy headmaster and myself were on a one in three rota to cover the school. This involved being the point of contact for all staff, attending breakfast, lunch and tea to supervise the pupils, be visible around the school, attend Sunday chapel and visit the boarding houses.

32. Looking back to when I was responsible for the day to day running of the school, I certainly hoped that if any child was being abused or ill-treated and it came to light at or around the time it was occurring that I would be informed immediately, day or night. Had I been informed I would give support to both the staff and pupils involved and aid, if required, in deciding the next steps to be taken. This obviously would not be possible if the pupil did not disclose the event or if the staff misinterpreted any abuse or ill-treatment as 'horseplay' or 'fooling around'.
33. The circumstances that lead me to believe that abuse in the school could have occurred and gone undetected would have been if the pupil was too scared to inform anyone for fear of reprisals from other pupils. Another possible reason could be for fear of not being believed by certain staff or if staff did not follow advice given in the school's child protection policy

Concerns about the school

34. Before I was employed at the school I was aware of press coverage of allegations of abuse made by a former housemaster. These allegations dated back to between 1989 and 1996. After I was in post for a short time in 2002 I truly felt that this school, its staff and pupils, were so different from my previous experiences. In my opinion the school had a day school staff running a boarding school which was not ideal and I sensed many issues could slip between cracks due to lack of cover and care. The pupils were very reserved, suspicious and not forthcoming and I sensed fearful of authority and certainly some of the senior boys had issues with females in authority. These factors led me to believe the atmosphere in the school could have led to some truth in such allegations.

Police investigations

35. Between May 2004 and my suspension in October 2004 the Central Scotland Police child protection family unit had been involved in three cases that I recall. The first was

the [REDACTED] case. The headmaster told police that he saw this only as horseplay.

36. The second was the charging and conviction of [REDACTED] GAP student called QWC, with lewd and libidinous behaviour with some junior boys, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The GAP student returned to [REDACTED] once his passport was released.
37. The third was the setting up of homemade surveillance camera equipment in pupils' bedrooms by the deputy housemaster, Mr Ross of Cunningham house for the purpose of catching a thief. The police and myself made it quite clear that this was a very serious matter and under no circumstances should it ever be repeated. The housemaster had the equipment removed immediately.
38. I am aware that in [REDACTED] 2004, after my suspension, when the child protection police from Bannockburn did get involved, on the YNT / [REDACTED] and YXL / [REDACTED] case they immediately found the source of the anonymous letter and both girls admitted to having relationships with the said members of the male teaching staff. I cannot remember if the police ever disclosed to me who wrote the letter just that they now knew who it was. I suspected the letter was written by the Matron in Trenchard House, Heather Devlin. She had already written to the Housemaster, Mr QYL to no avail and I wondered if she then went further.
39. It is my understanding that the matter was referred to the Procurator Fiscal. As the law stood a breach/abuse of trust between teacher and pupil was only an offence if the pupil was under 16. The girls were older at the time of the investigation. I was tasked by the headmaster back in May 2002, when I was one month into the job, to speak to all staff about inappropriate staff/pupil relationships. I have no knowledge of the outcome of the above police investigation, or whether the pupils were under age at the time.
40. I have no knowledge of the school's response to the suspensions of Mr YNT or Mr YXL

41. Within all these incidents the headmaster questioned me on why I felt the need for police involvement and what help had I given to the staff involved as opposed to the support I gave to the pupils who are the victims. He failed to appreciate me constantly bringing up the possible seriousness of not investigating fully some of these cases or of not allowing me as child protection officer to follow procedures.
42. I cannot say for certain to what extent the parents of the children were made aware of such concerns but I would imagine there would have been correspondence between them and the headmaster as I believe it would be his responsibility.

Suspension from Queen Victoria School

43. On Friday 8th October 2004 at 1:30 pm I met with the headmaster and personnel manager S. Rutledge and was given a letter headed '*Suspension from duty as a precaution*' which came as a complete bolt out of the blue even though I had been part of a progressive disciplinary procedure. According to the letter I was being suspended due to issues highlighted in feedback following a whole school inspection in September 2004 by HM Inspectorate of Education which can be found in: '*Inspection of care & welfare residential provision – published 15 February 2005 and Independent school inspection – published 15 February 2005*'. Up until that point I was under 'Restoring Efficiency' and had fully participated in the mediation over the summer holidays and was expecting our usual Friday 1.30pm meeting with the headmaster and his note-taker. Hence the surprise when this was not the usual meeting but one where a suspension letter was issued and I was given 20 minutes accompanied by the note-taker to clear my desk, hand in my keys and security pass and leave the building.
44. It is my understanding that Miss **QRS** was also suspended on the same day due to issues highlighted in the HMIe feedback.
45. I should like to make it clear that in my case the headmaster and the commissioners were using the HMIe report as a way of taking disciplinary action against me in a

crusade which had been running for a considerable amount of time. My evidence for this comes from minutes of commissioners' board meetings and written notes of communications between Mrs Deborah Bradley (dept head adjutant general's command at the MOD), Liz Cassidy (the Command Secretary) and Margaret Gilmour (Head of Adjutant General Civilian Personnel) MOD. These written documents were requisitioned under the Data Protection Act to aid me in any possible hearing.

46. The first of these documents is dated 9 February 2004, which was 7 months before the HMle Inspection. In this document the commissioners discussed 'the gradual breakdown in the working relationship between the headmaster and the assistant head teacher (Pastoral) which was now badly impacting on the effectiveness of the senior management team'.
47. This written communication is then followed by written notes of a telecom with D Bradley dated 12 March 2004 the issue being to secure legal advice on 'a proposal from the headmaster of Queen Victoria School (QVS), Dunblane to terminate the employment through a negotiated termination agreement of Miss Evelyn Smith, Assistant Head teacher, QVS.'
48. There is no doubt that there was a breakdown in relationships. This stemmed from an incident that had occurred. One month into the job the headmaster tasked me with giving a presentation to all staff on inappropriate staff/pupil relationships which many staff took exception to and told me so and this set me against many. They knew there was an ongoing situation which had never been addressed.
49. During the autumn term 2002 I was tasked by the headmaster to have staff do more hours for the pro rata increase in their boarding school allowance given in accordance with the McCrone agreement. My proposal to increase cover in boarding houses was necessary to safeguard and promote the care and welfare of pupils. The staff were up in arms and again I was set against them. Had the SMT dealt with McCrone in 2000 then staff would not have had 2 years of a pay increase with no changes to their working routine.

50. Within my remit as child protection officer I found I needed to quite forcefully raise my concerns when I knew a matter required referral out-with the school. I was astonished that parameters would be set by the headmaster as to what was and was not to be discussed with these outside agencies.
51. The MOD tasked the headmaster with putting me on a restoring efficiency programme for the summer term 2004
52. I took out a grievance against the headmaster on this as there was no element of restoration only criticism at each meeting with the headmaster and our note takers. There were no SMART goals set for me to work towards and achieve. This stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable , Realistic/Relevant and Time related.
53. The MOD then set up mediation during the summer holidays of 2004. The mediator met with the headmaster and myself separately and asked if I was prepared to meet jointly which I agreed to. The headmaster refused this and mediation broke down.
54. In a MOD memo dated 7 July 2004 headed RESTRICTED MANAGEMENT, Deborah Bradley states: *'Whilst I can fully understand Liz's (Cassidy) concerns and frustration over the perceived lack of progress and outcome of the Lyn Smith situation, we have been here before. We fully investigated the options open to us in dealing with the Lyn Smith issue as soon as it came on to our radar on 10 Mar 04. We are progressing the issues within the constraints of employment law and MOD civilian personnel procedures, to consider moving towards an unlawful process or to move outside of MOD's laid-down procedures at this stage would, in my opinion, be a grave misjudgement. The penalties against the department for a successful claim of unfair dismissal are limited to approximately 50K, but for a successful claim for discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation/or religious beliefs are limitless, and that's aside from the bad press that may be incurred. We really do need to proceed very carefully here'*.
55. The thirty months I spent at QVS were the worst months of my teaching career. I tried to work on behalf of the pupils and staff, in their best interests and seemed blocked at

every turn. On Friday 8 October 2004 at 1:30 pm I lost my job, I lost my career, I lost my home. I was unemployed for three years and subsequently faced financial difficulties as I had to draw my teaching pension five years early with an actuarially reduced annual sum and an actuarially reduced lump sum.

56. My union rep. at the time could inform me that in no other school in Scotland would the content of the HMle report be used as the cause for suspension of a member of staff.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

57. If any child in the school, or another person on their behalf, wished to make a complaint or report a concern the school had a complaints and reporting process in place. During my time at the school the complaints procedures could be found in the pastoral staff handbook. They included a leaflet for parents which would be sent to each home and a leaflet to pupils.
58. Concerns, clarifications or complaints were often received by housemasters/mistresses, head of physical education or department heads. The headmaster would also receive letters from parents. All concerns, clarifications or complaints would be thoroughly looked into, run by the headmaster in most cases, and replied to timeously by telephone or by report or letter in writing. These would be kept on pupil files.

Trusted adult/confidante

59. If a child had any worries, including concerns about the conduct or behaviour of other children, staff or others towards them, every pupil could speak openly with an academic tutor, the AHT /deputy headmaster and headmaster, a housemaster/mistress and deputy plus visiting tutors or a house matron and a housemaid. Each house also had a telephone where the number for Childline was

posted. They could also speak with a nursing sister and visiting GP at the school hospital.

60. School links were established with a number of agencies including an educational psychologist at the Notre Dame Family Centre for anger management, bereavement and counselling, and a clinical psychologist based at Stirling Royal Infirmary for counselling on suicides, depression, or any trauma. The school also had links with the MOD Police at Faslane who regularly gave a drugs education course, the Central Scotland Youth Project who provided courses on rape crisis and sexual abuse, Victim Support who would work with pupils on the consequence of crime and Careers Scotland who visited the school weekly to give help and advice.
61. Pupils to my knowledge raised concerns within the school. I have no personal knowledge of a pupil disclosing an incident out-with the school but this does not mean it did not happen

Abuse

62. Within the Pastoral Staff Handbook there is a section on 'The Role of the School in Protecting Children from Abuse' and it describes abuse as being physical, emotional, and sexual. Emotional abuse included bullying and racial harassment. Each member of staff/department/school office was in possession of a copy of this handbook. The Pastoral Staff Handbook was updated annually. The copy I received when I arrived at the school in April 2002 was the third edition dated January 2001.

Child protection arrangements

63. In relation to how staff, including managerial staff, were given guidance and instruction on how children in their care at the school should be treated, cared for and protected against abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour towards them, whether from staff, other adults, or fellow pupils this was covered in the Pastoral Staff Handbook. It

had sections called 'A guide to life in this school community' and 'the role of the school in protecting children from abuse'.

64. The Pastoral Staff Handbook contained guidance and instruction to staff on how to handle, and respond to, reports of abuse or ill-treatment of children by staff, other adults, or fellow pupils. Within the handbook were sections titled 'Action in specific cases of concern', 'Responding when children tell about abuse', 'Flow chart for school procedures' and 'INSET training on child protection issues'.
65. There was no autonomy or discretion given to staff, including managerial staff, in relation to these matters. All staff should follow the school guidelines.
66. To reduce the likelihood of abuse, ill-treatment, or inappropriate conduct by staff, or other adults, towards children at the school child protection arrangements were in place. All Staff were made fully aware at INSET training taken by me in May 2002 of inappropriate conduct.
67. To further reduce the likelihood staff were on duty in boarding houses as well as SMT on duty at weekends. There was a signing out book in boarding houses and I also insisted on regular roll calls throughout the day in boarding houses at weekends.

Record keeping

68. I have no knowledge of an actual policy for all record keeping at the school only that previously mentioned under the discipline policy. A tremendous amount of correspondence between staff and houses was done by email. I have no knowledge of how other members of the SMT recorded events/correspondence/interviews. I personally recorded on paper the information and actions during the investigation of an incident and this went to the headmaster.
69. When I took up employment at the school I could not see an existing policy on record keeping by staff in my office. The quality of records I had to use was insufficient but I

was able to pull a pupil file from the school office if I needed any pupil background or I went to see the housemaster/ mistress. At the time of my arrival I had no knowledge of any ongoing incidents.

Investigations into abuse – personal involvement

70. I was involved in three investigations on behalf of the school into allegations of abuse/ill-treatment of children at the school or into inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards children. These three incidents were the indecent assault on two junior boys by a GAP student, an incident of peer abuse on a pupil [REDACTED] and the YNT [REDACTED] and YXL [REDACTED] relationships.

Indecent assault by GAP student

71. The first investigation was the indecent assault on two junior boys [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] by their GAP student called QWC. The GAP student would play 'rough and tumble' with the boys in the house and had been told on several occasions to desist by the housemaster. The boys then disclosed to Trenchard staff that during 'the rough and tumble' QWC would handle their genitals. The deputy headmaster was a duty member of staff in Trenchard and he was involved in speaking with QWC and the boys. Staff reported their concerns to me.
72. I interviewed the boys and QWC. The headmaster eventually allowed me to get outside advice but only after the deputy head had expressed to him how serious this incident was and merited reporting to outside agencies such as the police, social work, or school inspectors. I sought advice from the Child Protection Police Family Unit and they in turn interviewed those concerned. QWC was charged by the police, left the school and the country on the release of his passport. I subsequently flagged up such an incident with HMIE during their inspection ('whistleblowing') and in particular my concerns of always being blocked by the headmaster over child protection issues.

Peer abuse on pupil [REDACTED]

73. The second incident I became aware of was following an incident in early June 2004 in the Cunningham boarding house common room where a pupil [REDACTED] told a duty member of staff he was feeling unwell and the duty member of staff sent him to see the Sister in the hospital. He was accompanied by another pupil [REDACTED]. The Sister could not find anything wrong but prompted by [REDACTED] the story came out that a group of boys had held [REDACTED] down and simulated gay sex on him with a bicycle pump through his clothes. This had been done to others in fun but no one had been held down by the group of boys. [REDACTED] refused to speak of it to his housemaster but was clearly upset. He was sent back to the school hospital and then he went to his see his [REDACTED] QRS [REDACTED] who was the housemistress of Wavell house in her flat on campus.
74. As assistant head teacher I was [REDACTED] QRS [REDACTED] s line manager regarding her role as Housemistress of the girls boarding house. We met at housemasters/mistress meetings with the headmaster and deputy headmaster and met with the other housemasters to go through the care standards and produce house handbooks and house development plans. I covered evening duty in her boarding house if a tutor was unable to attend, as I did with other houses and also did a significant amount of cover for her during spells of short or long term absence. We attended the same church and became friends during my time at the school. We are still in touch to this day and meet up during some of the school holidays as I do with former colleagues from Laurel Bank, Strathallan and Clifton Hall School.
75. I saw [REDACTED] at his [REDACTED] s flat later that evening and confirmed he was pacing up and down but refused to discuss the incident. The housemaster, deputy housemaster and myself all spoke with the boys concerned. The housemaster, headmaster and myself agreed on educational psychologist professional help with the Headmaster setting parameters as [REDACTED] was still very distressed over the incident and worried that the boys may think he 'grassed them up'. The headmaster was of the opinion that the incident was just 'horseplay'.

76. My concerns were that [REDACTED] did not see what was happening to him as, and what may have started out as, 'mucking around', as the boys called it, and in my mind this was more serious and possibly a child protection issue. The headmaster contacted Detective Inspector Rennie who spoke with me, the housemaster and the headmaster regarding abuse/assault/bullying and in his opinion it was a serious case of bullying. [REDACTED]'s [REDACTED] then began correspondence with the headmaster on her own behalf and that of her [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED]'s legal guardian, on the matter of [REDACTED] spending a great deal of time in his [REDACTED]'s flat. This had been a long running issue but my understanding was that at various points the housemaster had given permission. [REDACTED]'s [REDACTED] in turn was looking for assurances that the matter would be dealt with and that there would be no 'fallout' by the boys and saying he was at home for a while. All parents were contacted by me informing them of the incident.
77. The headmaster and housemaster said I should run the scenario by social services and I spoke to Steve Clark who saw the incident as serious and that the matter lay in the hands of [REDACTED]'s family. He suggested I speak with the police Family Unit. I spoke with Detective Sergeant Mike Moir who confirmed with me that the school was taking the matter seriously and stated the Family Unit would not be involved unless a complaint came via the family.
78. The outcome was that two pupils [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were suspended. Other pupils [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were seen by the headmaster, deputy headmaster, AHT and housemaster.
79. I am not sure whether the GP, educational psychologist, the paediatrician that saw [REDACTED], or the family referred the matter to the family unit but Detective Constable McEwan of the family unit was contacted and he phoned me on 2 July to discuss the incident. I had a meeting with DC McEwan on 2 August to discuss the referral process and he told me he was expecting the family to discuss with him how [REDACTED] was feeling on their return from holiday. I reminded QRS [REDACTED] that DC McEwan was expecting to hear how [REDACTED] was feeling about the incident after the holidays.

80. There was a Family Unit Inquiry with all boys concerned being interviewed accompanied by their parent or nominated other person. Several of the parents who had sons involved in the incident subsequently wrote to the headmaster complaining about my handling of the incident. They complained of my rather business like conversation over the phone when I was informing them of a possible police interview. They also questioned my impartiality as I was friendly with Miss QRS [REDACTED]. They inferred I was delighted that the matter was being taken further and that I seemed to be on a crusade. In the meantime I had communicated with the headmaster and commissioners on [REDACTED]'s behalf asking them to consider, as a welfare issue, letting him be a day pupil staying with his [REDACTED] from August 2004. The headmaster and the commissioners refused this request. As neither QRS [REDACTED] nor his [REDACTED] could give assurances that [REDACTED] would not continue to seek refuge with his [REDACTED] the headmaster asked them to withdraw [REDACTED] from the school.
81. In respect of the complaint about my handling of the issue I attempted to inform the parents concerned that I had no hand in bringing this matter to the attention of the police unit. It had to come from the family. In my telephone conversations I simply stated what the police had told me, that they wanted to speak with the boys concerned and gave them the information I had been given by police unit about the date, time and venue of the meeting. I informed parents that they could accompany their son or nominate a proxy if they were unable to attend.

YNT [REDACTED] and YXL [REDACTED] relationships

82. The third incident I was aware of came to my attention in November 2004 whilst I was on suspension. I was contacted by the police and arranged to meet at Bannockburn Police Station. The police did not wish to meet with me at my home within the school grounds. They wished to discuss the two members of staff, YNT [REDACTED]'s and YXL [REDACTED]'s relationships with two female pupils. I learnt that the police had ascertained who had written the anonymous letter regarding the staff/pupil relationships and also that both staff members had been suspended. I learnt that both girls when interviewed had said they did have relationships: [REDACTED] with YXL [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with YNT [REDACTED].

83. On that day I was asked to give a statement about the then alleged relationships and how the school had dealt with the matter.

Specific alleged abusers

YNT

84. YNT was a teacher of [REDACTED] and a visiting boarding house tutor when I was there between 2002 and 2004. I have no idea how old he was. He was married with children and was quiet spoken. He was very pleasant to speak to, smiled a lot was very relaxed and dressed casually. We chatted on duty nights on all sorts of topics. On the duty nights I saw him working with children in the junior boarding house. He was very relaxed with the children and chatty, and in my opinion sometimes a little too relaxed and over familiar. On occasion I saw him discipline children. He made sure the pupils knew what was expected of them and if they didn't do that then he gave them an appropriate punishment. Despite putting myself on duty in Trenchard house every Monday night when Mr YNT was on duty I saw no signs of inappropriate behaviour or abuse but in my position as child protection officer I became aware of a matter that needed investigation.
85. QRS passed to me, as her line manager, concerns raised about Trenchard house which is the junior boarding house. The concerns were raised by Jill Adams, who was a teacher of English and assistant housemistress in Wavell house, the girls' boarding house. Similar concerns were also raised by Jill Howie head of the modern languages department, Duncan McLay head of the physical education department and QRS
86. These concerns had been raised to Alice Hainey the assistant headteacher who was my predecessor prior to my appointment in April 2002. The concerns were about the culture in Trenchard House and the inappropriate behaviour by QYL, the housemaster and CKC, a tutor and the SNR. This behaviour was being openly discussed by pupils in class and around the school and innuendo

by parents. The culture was one of a lax attitude towards social evening drinking and the exclusive treatment of the senior girls who were resident in Trenchard House.

87. Simultaneously the headmaster received an anonymous letter detailing an alleged relationship between YNT and [REDACTED] who was a school senior monitor and also in relation to CKC's and QYL's behaviour with female pupils at a rugby international. What gave this concern over YNT's relationship with a pupil credibility was the fact that Jill Adams, a close friend of the YNT family, became a confidant for [REDACTED], YNT wife.
88. YNT was working in Trenchard house as senior tutor within such a climate and receiving messages from the housemaster and SNR condoning behaviour which several others had expressed concern over. It is my understanding that Heather Devlin, the Trenchard house matron, had written to QYL the Trenchard housemaster about YNT and [REDACTED]
89. Following on from being tasked by the headmaster to talk to all staff about inappropriate staff/pupil relationships, many staff spoke to me about their indignation about being spoken to about this. They said 'everyone knew' what was going on in Trenchard house between YNT and [REDACTED] and with YXL YXL and [REDACTED]. They believed it was being condoned by the housemaster and SNR and questioned why had the headmaster had not dealt with it.
90. YNT wrote to me in [REDACTED] 2005 for a letter of statement for his 'School Hearing' at the [REDACTED] 2005. It related specifically to the interviews myself and the headmaster carried out in late May/early June 2002 with YNT and [REDACTED] Being senior monitor [REDACTED] knew what could be at stake and she felt coerced by the headmaster to say that there had not been a relationship. YNT wanted me to give a statement of fact as to what happened in this interview. I obliged by stating in writing: *'I can confirm that the questions directed at her [REDACTED] by the Headmaster were open, there was no emotive language*

and she was free to give any response when asked simply, 'Was she having a relationship with YNT [REDACTED]?' To this replied she was not.'

YXL [REDACTED]

91. I know YXL [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] department and a visiting boarding house tutor between 2002 and 2004 when I was in post. I have no idea how old he was. I do not remember very much about him as our paths seldom crossed, but he was efficient as far as completing pupil reports. He kept himself to himself and his own group of friends in the staff room. On my odd visit to his department I saw him with children. He was very business-like and organised and would expect pupils to behave.
92. Once near the sports hall before games I saw him discipline a child. Mr YXL [REDACTED] was shouting at a boy and I can only describe my feelings at the time that he seemed to 'have lost the plot'. He was enraged and red in the face. I asked to see him later in the day and we spoke through the incident. Initially I think he was unhappy at having to speak with me but once we talked the incident through I think we parted on reasonable terms.
93. I never saw him abusing a child but the incident outside the sports hall was in front of older and younger pupils and staff and I was uncomfortable regarding how the pupil was feeling, regardless of what he may have done to provoke such an outburst by a member of staff.
94. The only other incident I was aware of involving YXL [REDACTED] came to my attention via the headmaster. He had received an anonymous letter detailing an alleged relationship between Mr YXL [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who was the [REDACTED]. Personally I never saw anything but in my position as child protection officer I knew this matter needed investigation because it is my understanding that Vivien Hiddleston, the hospital auxiliary, may have been aware of the relationship and that residents up on Victoria Green were aware of [REDACTED] and Mr YXL [REDACTED] spending time together in his garden. There was also an incident of record with the police back in [REDACTED] 2001 where Mr YXL [REDACTED] was involved in a disagreement with a relative of [REDACTED]'s in

a public place in Stirling. These were allegations/rumours but being openly discussed by staff, pupils and parents. A topic of common knowledge to staff and some of the SMT, but not myself, was that they believed he had left his previous school 'under a cloud' involving pupil relationships.

95. The SCIS guidelines on child protection adopted by the school recommended that any allegation of teacher/pupil relationship should be investigated with the member of staff being suspended pending such investigation, and where a breach/abuse of trust is suspected the police child protection (CP) unit should be called in. My intention was to follow these procedures but the headmaster stated he would not suspend the staff concerned, nor have the police involved.
96. An internal investigation then took place and I was involved in speaking with only those staff and pupils named in the anonymous letter, namely [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and YNT [REDACTED] along with the headmaster. I was not involved in the interview with Mr YXL [REDACTED] and to this day I do not understand why. I asked the headmaster about his interview with Mr YXL [REDACTED] to which he stated that if Mr YXL [REDACTED] was lying to him he knew 'he owed him one'. All concerned denied the relationships.

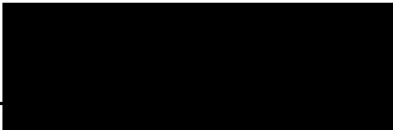
Helping the Inquiry

97. I left Queen Victoria School 16 years ago and have not taught in a boarding school since. I would assume that anything I say, which in my view are the lessons to be learned to protect children in the future, would already be common policy nowadays. I do however wish to make the following comments.
98. Schools, and especially boarding schools, should not be run by heads who are obsessed by paperwork and who see policy documents and their updating as a tick box exercises to keep HMle happy. Policy documents are there to provide knowledge and guidance to staff, pupils and parents and should be seen as active and being applied in practice when necessary.

- 99. The taking of minutes of a meeting are a record of what has been discussed but they should also have an action column allowing for matters to move forward and not just be re-visited at the next meeting.

- 100. There should be separate teaching staff to house staff/parents or have teaching staff with vastly reduced timetables. There must also be consistency in duty hours, rules and rewards. All staff must be qualified to Boarding Schools Association or equivalent level and/or guidance certificates. There should also be separate promoted posts for discipline and welfare and there must be an open door policy for all senior management

- 101. 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..... 24 November 2020