

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HLB

Support person present: No

1. My name is HLB. My date of birth is 1980. My contact details are known to the inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Lanark at the William Smellie Hospital. I grew up in the Scottish Borders. We were very lucky to have a beautiful house in a small village. It was a wonderful place that looked like the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings*. There were lots of fields and trees. My siblings and I were left to roam around like wild sheep dogs. It was a beautiful place to grow up. It was very quiet and there were fewer than one hundred people in the village. There was one shop. It's one of the most stunning places in the world.
3. My dad's name was and my mum's name is. They were extremely busy people. They were sort of social engineers. They were always involved in battles for justice. They were hugely involved in politics, business, charity and all kinds of things. They had a business which employed over 120 people. They were very heavily involved in community projects, heritage and government quangos. One of the reasons that they sent us off to boarding school was because they had so much in their calendar. It was overwhelming.
4. I have two older sisters, who is five years older than me, and who is three years older than me. I have a younger brother, who is about a year younger than me. I went to the local primary school. There were fourteen pupils and

we all sat in one classroom. It was right at the foot of the hills, surrounded by fields. It had a lovely ethos. The teacher was strict because she had to be, but she had a free rein in the days before everything was controlled from a central office. It was a really nice education.

5. It came to a point when the headmistress approached my parents and told them that they had to find another school for my brother and me. We had outgrown the curriculum and she couldn't teach us anymore. She recommended that they pick out a private school.
6. We could have attended the local high school. It was a really nice school. I don't think the facilities and the opportunities were the same as going to a school in Edinburgh or elsewhere. I think my parents really wanted us to have advantages in things like sport so they looked at boarding school. My sisters were already in boarding school. They went to [REDACTED] They hated it there. It was miserable for them.
7. It all seemed to happen very quickly. I don't know where my parents heard recommendations from. They probably got the Loretto prospectus or something. I can't remember complaining about going to Loretto. I didn't know anything different. I'm pretty sure I was open to it and happy about it. My brother and I were encouraged and shepherded into it by our parents. We went for a meeting with the headmaster. He was an amazing guy called Norman Drummond. He was one of the most inspirational guys I've ever met. We took a tour round both campuses, junior and senior school. Everything looked nice. It was only 45 minutes away from home. They had cricket, they had art. As a kid, you're like a sponge and you just wanted soak up all these things.
8. My brother and I had to sit an entrance exam for Loretto. I was very nervous I thought I was going to be the stupidest person in the room. People were coming from different schools and they had uniforms. A lot of them were coming from private schools. It was a completely different thing for me. I just assumed that they were all really smart people and that I was an idiot, but my brother and I got in.

9. Before we started at Loretto, we went to Aitken and Niven in Edinburgh. We needed all these unbelievable garments and clothes. We had to have handkerchiefs, napkins, napkin rings. My parents were given a list of everything that was required. I would love to see that list now. It was like something from the Edwardian era. It was like at start of *Harry Potter* when he has to go to Diagon Alley to collect his magic trunk and his wand. Your wand at Loretto would be your cricket bat. I remember going there with my mum and brother and feeling so sad because it was costing so much money. I think it was over £1000 per person.

Loretto School, Musselburgh

10. I was ten, just about to turn eleven when I went to Loretto. My brother was nine, just about to turn ten. I remember being really determined to work very hard. My parents were spending so much money to send us there so I felt that I needed to make a success of it. I think the fees were about £10,000 per annum, but I'm not sure. It was a lot of money.
11. There were two different campuses. The upper school had beautiful lawns and a church in the middle. It had haunted looking buildings, a bit like *Harry Potter*. It had more modern, 1960s buildings as well. The junior school was split into two parts as well. It had a beautiful old building called North Esk Lodge with a big playground. There was a separate boarding house, Newfield, down the road with playing fields. North Esk Lodge was the main junior school building and it had the dining room, assembly hall, school matron and headmaster's house in it. Newfield was just used as a boarding house. There was a teaching block and a music block as well. When we were at the junior school, we occasionally went across the river to do something at the upper school but they were pretty much separate schools. There was very little mixing, except for big chapel services at the end of year and things like that.
12. There were about eighty pupils at the junior school and three hundred pupils at the senior school. I started at the senior school when I was thirteen, about to turn fourteen. There were girls in the final two years at the senior school, lower and upper sixth.

When I was in my final year at the junior school, they announced that they were going to introduce girls from the next year. When I reached senior school, I did my first year and it was all boys apart from the final two years. From the year below me, my brother's year, girls started in third year and worked their way up.

13. There were very few day pupils when I was at Loretto. I can only think of one day pupil in my class. There was a big difference between boarders at the junior school and the senior school. In the junior school, about a fifth to a quarter of pupils were weekly boarders who went home at weekends. The rest of us stayed locked in. In the senior school, there was no such thing as a weekly boarder.

Staff

14. Norman Drummond was the headmaster of the senior school, so we didn't tend to see him when we were at the junior school. The SNR [REDACTED] the junior school was a very nice guy called CRS [REDACTED]. He was [REDACTED] when I arrived at Loretto. He taught [REDACTED] too.
15. Later, at the end of my first year at senior school, there was another head teacher called Keith Budge. He came from a high end, English private school. He was very academically driven and trying to put this structure onto an Edinburgh boarding school. Loretto wasn't particularly academic. He brought some good changes to the school, but there was a lot of resistance to some things and it didn't work out for him.
16. The staff were excellent. I'm still friends with many of them. They were really passionate and sports coaches too. They were all cricket and rugby fans, which inspired us.
17. Each boarding house had a housemaster and they lived on site with their families. They were in charge of their house for five nights a week. There was also an assistant housemaster who I think lived somewhere else. They would come in and be on duty for a couple of nights to give the housemaster a break. There was usually a junior member of staff who would help the assistant housemaster. They would often be a

tutor from New Zealand, someone straight out of school looking to get into teaching. I think the school had set up an exchange with some private schools in New Zealand and the tutor would have a little flat within the buildings. They also helped out with sport and things like that.

18. The housemasters were usually teachers too. It was long hours for them because they were teaching as well, and they'd committed to working evenings and weekends. The staff had to be all-rounders. Some staff would teach two to three subjects and also coach sports, some would also be assistant housemasters.

Routine at Loretto

First impressions

19. Our parents drove us to the school and dropped us off on our first day. We had massive trunks with everything in there. I think there was someone to show us around on our first day. I remember seeing the toilet blocks and things like that. There was a big rush of information. Half the pupils in my year were new while the other half had been boarding since the age of eight. It was like entering a completely alien culture. There was a wholly different school dialect, slang words and nicknames they'd use, different routines and procedures. You were always racing to catch up and integrate. There was no time to wallow.
20. There was a rule for everything. There was an initial period of orientation. I think it was maybe two weeks when you couldn't be punished because you were new. After that, people could hand out punishments and you were expected to have learned everything.
21. I remember one child who I think may have been autistic. It was back in the days when people didn't know what autism was. He had a really hard time. The first week, we were on the rugby field for the first time. The staff started looking towards the forest,

wondering if someone was hiding there. We saw his head peering out from behind a tree. He had lived all his life on a boat and Loretto was his first experience of schooling.

22. He had a particularly hard time because nobody understood his autism. He used to try and communicate with his teddy bear pig. It was really sad. He was always getting into trouble. I remember the headmaster told him to go for a little walk to calm down and he took off to downtown Musselburgh. He took everything literally. He was always losing his pen so one of the teachers gave him a pen with a piece of string attached to the lid. He would wander around with the lid attached to his neck because he'd lost the pen.
23. When it was his turn to wake up the rest of the house, he accidentally woke up the entire boarding house at midnight. Everybody got into the showers. We were getting dressed and going down for breakfast. Somebody had a clock somewhere and realised it was midnight.

Dormitories/living accommodation

24. There were two boarding houses in the junior school, North Esk Lodge and Newfield. The housemaster of North Esk Lodge SNR CRS. The housemaster of Newfield was my geography and one of my cricket teachers. I was with my brother in North Esk Lodge for the first year, which was part of the main school building. He was my best friend. I think brothers were often put into the same house.
25. I believe the school asked to separate us so I was sent to another boarding house after my first year. I don't know what the thinking behind that was or who took the decision. I don't know whether they thought we were hanging out too much. It was very unusual to be moved to a different boarding house. I was very sad about it. I was still very close to my brother at that point, but it definitely weakened our relationship. We had been like twins before that. I was sent off to Newfield. It was only a five minute walk away, but it was a different place. We just slept there and got changed there before and after sport.

26. I remember having to give tours to other parents and being told, "Don't show them these bits, show them these bits." It was really grotty in the early years. There was sixty year old, peeling, dark varnish all over the walls. It looked kind of clawed. There were open showers with no privacy. It was very spartan and looked a bit like an army barracks. At the end of the first year in the junior school, they refurbished all the boarding accommodation – new carpets, paint, curtains, radiators and lights. It was a dramatic improvement.
27. It was all dormitories at the junior school. There were about eight to ten boys of mixed ages, from about aged eight to thirteen. There were a couple of staff who had apartments in the boarding houses, including the head chef and some of the teachers. We had a space for our bed in the dormitory with a drawer underneath. We had a little cabinet beside our beds. Our clean clothes and uniform were kept there. We might have a couple of possessions, a toy or a puzzle, an alarm clock. That was our space. There were no locks anywhere at junior school.
28. The senior school was spread out over a much larger area. There were five boarding houses, each with different reputations. One was School House, which was where we had assembly and ate meals. I was in Pinkie House, which looked like Hogwarts. Everyone believed it was haunted by the ghosts from the Battle of Preston Pans, brought there when it was a field hospital. There were two modern-built boarding houses, Seton House and Hope House. Hope House had the worst reputation and was where they sent the really wild people. There was the girls' house, just outside the main gates, called Trafalgar Lodge, which was a very nice residence. Later on, they built a second girls' residence.
29. Certain boarding houses were renowned for a kind of pack behaviour. Hope House had a reputation for being the worst, Seton House was very bad, Pinkie House was not quite as bad and School House had the best reputation. I don't believe there were any issues on that scale in the girls' boarding houses. In Hope House, they took pride in being as loud, abusive and violent as possible. I remember the man from Aitken and Niven came into the school on one occasion. The boys from Hope House were all screaming his name and drove him off campus.

30. If you were put into Hope House, you were terrified. As bad as the things that happened in Pinkie House were, it was much worse in Hope House and very bad in Seton House. There were large gatherings of severely damaged boys and sadists in Hope House and Seton House. Hope House did get cleaned up a lot by the final years. One of the head boys of the junior school was put into Hope House, which changed the dynamic greatly.
31. In the senior school, we slept in dormitories for third, fourth and fifth form. There were about ten to fifteen boys in the dormitories of mixed ages. In lower sixth, there were single rooms and a couple of smaller rooms for two or three people. Upper sixth formers all had single rooms. I remained in Pinkie House throughout my senior school years and my brother was in Pinkie as well.
32. Mercifully, near the end of third form, after my first year, new European Union or EEC legislation improving child welfare came into effect that meant washrooms were changed from open communal showers to lockable cabins.
33. Schools always evolve. They had to sell places and that was becoming much harder. The school numbers were dropping as fees rose and boarding became less culturally acceptable. They had to make themselves more marketable. That was why girls were introduced.

Mornings and bedtime

34. I remember being woken up at 6.30 or 7.00 am. It wasn't enough sleep for growing kids. One of the boys would be in charge of getting everyone up, depending on the chores rota. I remember the shock of the lights going on, then it was bang, bang, bang, "Everyone up," showered, go. In junior school we had to do something called "Links" before breakfast. If you were in North Esk Lodge, you had to walk around the whole block, which was around ten or fifteen minutes. The boys in Newfield House had to walk from their boarding house to the main house for their morning exercise.

35. At junior school, I think bedtime was about 8:00 pm. At the senior school, I think it was 9:30 or 9:45 pm. Darkness descended over everything. It was just another time that the people in charge would pick on people. I can't recall any children wetting the bed.

Uniform

36. In junior school, the dress wear was like a Navy uniform with extremely uncomfortable nylon sweaters that could produce mini lightning bolts of static electricity when you took them off. We had red socks that we had to pull up to the knees and attach with garters. We had to have a comb tucked into our socks at all times. We had to have a handkerchief. It was really strange and very uncomfortable. On Sundays, we had to get into our kilts. We wore long socks with garters, the kilt and a blue-grey jacket with a waistcoat.
37. Junior school boys had to wear shorts all year round in those days. In the winter months, when it could be zero degrees to minus sixteen, people had severe chaps and their legs would be bleeding. Pupils at the senior school wore trousers. When I went up to the senior school, they changed it for the junior school as well and boys were able to wear trousers.
38. Our normal clothes used to be called "civvies". They were kept in a drawer under our bed. It was only on very rare occasions that we were allowed to wear them, I think at some point on Saturday afternoon. There was a lot of bullying over personal clothes. People would mock boys who didn't have the right designer labels. I was taunted about my clothes all the time and on occasion other children would rip them. In senior school, in third form, someone threw a firecracker into my drawer and blew up my personal clothes. We had one set so after that, I had no civvies to wear for the rest of the term.
39. Apart from Saturday afternoon, we wore uniform. There was a shoe shining period and inspection almost every day, carried out by the housemaster and pupils. Everything had to be perfect, including rugby boots. They were covered in mud and you had to try and wash them in the showers.

Mealtimes/food

40. In junior school, one of the strictest things was that we had to have our hair absolutely perfect for every single meal time. Before meals, everyone would rush into the bathroom, clogging the sinks with toilet paper so they could dunk their heads in, trying to get their hair into some sort of conformity. A bell would ring to signal line up and then there would be silence. There were final-year boys at the dining room, who would inspect our hands, hair and napkins. If they weren't perfect, you might get a kick and would then have to run back to the washrooms to try and fix it – even ink stains that wouldn't come out. Once inside the dining room, we would stand in silence beside our chair. Grace would be said and then we could sit down.

41. The food was very good and the kitchen staff were very nice. Meals were more family orientated at the junior school. There were tables of around eight boys and there was a staff member on each table. We were assigned tables every term and we did a rotation every day to ensure people talked to different people and the adults as well. The headmaster's wife was head of one table, the other housemaster's wife was head of another table. The presence of women and mixed ages gave it more of a family feel. Having a member of staff at the table made an enormous difference. The staff member could make sure that everybody was well-behaved, everybody got something and everybody ate something, whether they wanted to or not. There was a top table where the headmaster sat with the head of school and the prefects.

42. It was very different at the senior school. If you didn't eat you would have to go to the tuck shop or something like that. At lunch, the top table would be staff members, although I think there were other dining rooms for staff too. The headmaster and the heads of houses would be at the top table. Each table was drawn up by a prefect at the start of each term. There would be a big list outside the dining hall. There were usually two pupils from each year, upper sixth all the way down to third year. There were no staff at the tables and pupils were in charge. There was no supervision for breakfast. Sometimes there would be a staff member wandering around the building at dinner.

43. When you were in third year, you were essentially a slave for these tables or other sixth years around you. Even at lunch, there was no sense of adults, who would be at the other end of the room. They were working long hours and they were having their lunch, so they couldn't manage everything. People were trusted to be heads of table. The heads of table could be extremely nasty and demanding.
44. In your third year, your first three weeks of upper school were called your grace period. You couldn't be punished or forced to do things. The moment that ended, you were called a scab. Fagging was practised so you would be sent out all mealtime, going out and fetching stuff for people older than you. You were treated as worthless. Even the people in the year above you, who might be younger than you, treated you like shit. Everybody would send you off to get a meal, a tea, more food for them, a multitude of errands. When you came back to the table, your food might have been put on your seat or there would be nothing left or somebody would have poured a whole shaker of salt into your tea or food. It was constant. Even while you waited to go into the dining hall, the School House pupils would spit on you every day from the top of the stairs.
45. At dinner time, it was even worse. All rules were out the window. You would be forced to take a jug of water or milk and pour it on the head of a sixth year. Most of the time, people wouldn't blame the terrified third year doing it and would identify the person who had ordered it at the other end of the hall, but you could get punched. It was a very strange ritual almost every dinner time and breakfast.
46. Because there was no adult supervision at the tables in the senior school, you could not ensure even distribution of food. The eldest child took their food first and it would go down the table. If something popular was being served, there might be nothing left by the time it got to younger children. You were on your feet the whole time. There was no sitting down to enjoy eating. You had to grab what you could when you could. In third year, maybe once every week you would either get nothing or a shortage for one meal.
47. Sometimes the upper six formers would invite a friend to sit on the table at breakfast or lunch and then there was no space for you. Maybe you could perch on the end or

you could just spend the whole time fetching things for other people. Occasionally people in younger years would sometimes invite friends too. I remember at one point, it kept happening for a week at breakfast. When I came back to my table, there had been a group discussion. I was told that it had been decided that I was the least popular so I should go. I tried to find another table where there might be a space and hope that people might let me on. I didn't get much to eat during those meals. It was *The Hunger Games* on every level.

48. Third years did the official fetching for three weeks, fourth years for two weeks and fifth years for a week. As soon as the bell went, you had to go to the kitchen and get the trays and the pots and bring them to the head of the table. The unofficial fagging and fetching of things would be constant for third years. It was a lot like Roald Dahl's childhood experiences at Eton, as described in the book *Boy*.
49. When I moved up to fourth year, there were changes to mealtimes. They brought in a really good person in charge of catering, who changed the whole meal system and distribution of food. People were responsible for getting their own. There was also a massive change after the girls came in. There were girls in the youngest year when my brother started senior school, which brought immediate changes and improvements. I think there was a realisation that the girls couldn't be forced to do what the boys had been doing.

Washing and bathing

50. We had a shower in the morning and after sports. Some people had them in the evening, but that was up to the individual. There were communal showers until the change in 1995 when private shower cabins with locks were introduced. Each boarding house in the junior school had one or two tub rooms. There were more tub rooms for each boarding house in the senior school. The tub rooms were rooms with a row of sinks, a big open shower block and a toilet block.

School

51. In the junior school, I started in C form, which I think was the equivalent of primary 6. I then went into B form and A form. Senior school started with third form when I was thirteen turning fourteen. I went onto fourth form, fifth form and lower and upper sixth form. The assumption was that pupils would stay at the school until they were eighteen, eighteen and a half. I only know of one person who left at sixteen. There were a lot more classroom hours than at state school. That was the big difference, going from the local primary school to Loretto. We had classes six days a week and prep. We started very early in the morning and finished at about 7 o'clock at night in junior school and 9 o'clock at night in senior school.
52. It was a very full day. We had a diary that we had to carry around with us. We had our timetable on that, our prep tasks. We would follow each other round in a group. The education at the junior school was fantastic. There were small classes and really good teachers. It was a nice syllabus, especially if you had a good memory. We were assigned subjects in the junior school. In the senior school, we had to do all ten subjects in our first year but then we got to choose. It was narrowed down to three subjects in sixth form. The senior school used the Midlands Examining Group. We sat GCSEs in fifth form and A levels in upper sixth. With an education system based on memory, having a good memory was a big advantage. There were good teachers and bad teachers at the senior school, like at every school.
53. We had classes in the morning, lunch and then sport in the afternoon. There would always be extra-curricular activities, which was one of the advantages that I had from going to a place like Loretto rather than going to a state school. We had to go to debates, concerts or lectures. It was a hugely fulfilling programme.
54. At night time, we had to do prep. In the junior school, it was for one hour. We had set homework for the two or three classes we had during the day. We did the prep in a classroom and a member of staff would be present. The prep time in senior school was two hours and took place in the boarding house. It was absolutely overwhelming. From third form to fifth form we were put into rooms with large desks around the walls.

We sat in silence for two hours with someone from lower sixth in charge of us on a rotation basis. In lower sixth and upper sixth form, pupils did prep in their own bedrooms, unless on duty.

55. I think prep was from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the senior school. It was six days a week, although I think it was in the afternoon on a Saturday. It went on until very late at night. You were absolutely beat. By that point, you'd been up since 6:30, 7:00 am, you'd been running miles that day and you were absolutely knackered. Suddenly, you had six essays or something like that to write. You'd be sitting in this room, trying to focus and grapple with this academia. I struggled with the timing of it because I was a perfectionist. There was no way we could complete the tasks in time. I would have lists of homework and it got to the point that I couldn't do it anymore. About three times a year, usually around project deadlines, kids had to do "all-nighters", where at the point of lights out, they would go in secret to the prep room and then work all the way through to breakfast the next morning. Sometimes it could be three days in a row, with toast and Nescafe keeping us alive.
56. In my second year of being at the senior school, they started using more of a tutor system. Every pupil was given a bit more care and someone to bounce ideas off and see how they were getting on. That was a big improvement. There was more of an adult presence in the prep rooms from that point.
57. When I studied psychology at university, we learned that if a guinea pig is repeatedly subjected to electric shocks, eventually it just sits still and takes it. I was very much like that at Loretto. I had complete breakdowns in fourth year, lower sixth and upper sixth form. I just couldn't handle what was going on anymore. I don't know whether it was the events of those current years or all that had happened in the previous years. It just felt very heavy from every aspect of school. I felt like I was incarcerated. I couldn't go out or see people, as well as all the bullying and things like that. I became very depressed. I remember coming out of class one day and throwing all my books and folders in a bin and saying that I didn't care anymore. I remember trashing my room in sixth form when I had a private room. I threw everything on the floor and smashed up all the files. I just didn't want to deal with it.

58. One of the ways my breakdown manifested itself was that I started to laugh under the stress of class time. I could be miserable in the boarding house and crying at night. When it got to classes and there was a level of authority and punishment and pressure, for some reason it seemed so absurd and I got the giggles. It went on for years. Nobody noticed at first. I was trying to keep it a secret. Maybe it was a sign of mania, but it really got out of hand. People noticed and then they started laughing, which became greatly disruptive. The teachers got really annoyed and it spread and spread. There were big staff meetings about it. My parents got called in. I now know that it stemmed from mania and living in a very messed up environment. I wasn't able to handle the pressure as an adolescent. The school sent me to a psychologist when I was in my fourth year. It was a private psychologist in Edinburgh, but I can't remember his name. He came to the school to give a talk once.
59. I think the staff thought my problems related to school performance. I don't think they understood. I didn't understand it. When the school called my parents, they said that I was off the rails and not completing my tasks, not putting in effort and falling far behind. It was very punishment heavy. Typically, housemasters thought boys could be punished into getting better results and behaving in a better way. It doesn't work for some people. There were some very sympathetic members of staff, but they didn't know the full extent at all. I hinted about difficulties. They told me to take my time and do things at a level I was able to manage.
60. Other teachers didn't accept this. I remember having a to-do list of 28 essays at one point while more piled on each day. Trying to work my way through this while under the duress of torture from senior boys, bullying from classmates, in the midst of a nervous breakdown was too much. The idea that being sent for punishing exercise and litter picks at 6:30 am would fix all this was baffling. At one point, I even got stopped by my housemaster from having cricket practice in my free time, my one escape and love, because of the dip in academic performance caused by all this distress. It felt like punishment from all sides.
61. When I was at junior school, I was able to put on horse blinkers. I just worked and worked and worked. I was very proud of my results. I would get the best marks in

school – straight As and straight 1s for effort in every subject. In the senior school, my marks went down to the other extreme. By lower sixth, I remember getting a report that was straight U grades and straight 5s. There wasn't a close association between the junior and senior school. Nobody thought to ask why someone who had been up at that level was now at rock bottom.

62. I was so tired all the time from third year to upper sixth that I would often fall asleep during prep time. I physically couldn't cope with two hours of prep. In third and fourth year, the older pupil in charge of prep would smash a ruler down on your desk beside your ear to wake you up if you fell asleep. Even in sixth form, when we finally got our own studies, there was still a lot of bullying. Every single radiator on the floor was connected. If one person shook the radiator, every radiator in every study banged. This went on all the time when you were trying to concentrate and it became impossible.
63. I managed to turn it around in my final term. I was offered a room at the end of the house, away from everyone else. Things improved dramatically. I could concentrate. My workload and production rate went up and up and I managed to salvage my A levels. I got an A in economics and politics, a C in geography and an E in French. We weren't the best pupils in French class. The teacher was struggling a bit. We had the worst results in Britain in one of our modular exams. The head of the examining board was summoned to try and turn things around.

Sport

64. When I first started at the school, there was a term and a half of rugby. The other half of spring term was hockey. The summer term was cricket. By the end of my time at Loretto, they'd opened it up to more activities. You had to play rugby. Everybody was forced to play rugby. Only a couple of people in the senior school who were very frail didn't have to take part because it would have been dangerous. Everybody else was turfed out onto the rugby field. There was no debate about it, whether you were going to be broken in half or not. Originally, the school had a very strong rugby team. As the

numbers went down and the demographic changed it became very weak. It remained a huge focus and the school was very proud of that.

65. We had an amazing calendar of sports fixtures. The whole school would be bused off to Strathallan, Merchiston and Fettes or they would be bussed in. There would be multiple matches taking place at the same time. I was [REDACTED] in my final year. I played for the first XV at rugby in junior school and at representative level as well. I played for [REDACTED] for club rugby. It was very unusual to do things outside of school. Most people just did what was in school. I [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as well when I was seventeen. From the age of fourteen to eighteen, I would play cricket outside of the school.
66. The school stopped me playing rugby for [REDACTED] at one point in a trial game for the Edinburgh clubs team. In the school holidays, I went along to play rugby at the local Borders town. I was fifteen or sixteen at the time and my brother and I played as much as we could. During the school term, we would try and play if we had a weekend off school. From that, I got selected for the [REDACTED] team. The first match was on a holiday weekend off school. I was on the cusp of getting selected for Edinburgh but the school blocked me from playing in the next game and the opportunity was gone. We had an intra-house singing competition at the school, which clashed with the fixture. My housemaster at Pinkie House wanted every single person – all seventy of us – to be at this singing competition. He said that I wasn't allowed to play in the game. My parents contacted him, but he still refused. They then approached the headmaster, Keith Budge, who must've spoken to the housemaster, and also said that I couldn't go. The illogical and selfish thinking was that if one person got a ticket out then everybody would want one. It was very frustrating for me at that age.

Leisure time

67. There was a lot of discomfort in my early days at the school. It was very militaristic. There was no contact with outside. There was one phone, locked in a cupboard under the stairs, but nobody had access to it. Every day was very regimented. You were

always pushed from one place to another with very little time to relax or lack of structure. I didn't really know any different. I just thought that was the way things were.

68. There were occasional windows of leisure time. In the senior school, we had a small window in the afternoon when we would all go and watch *Neighbours*, *Countdown* and *Fifteen to One*. There was also a little bit of free time after prep in the evenings. We would watch some TV or some of us would play cricket in the dorm with a foam ball or a ball of socks. That was my passion, until we got into trouble because it wasn't allowed. We went off to bed after that.
69. On Saturday, we had classes in the morning and then sport in the afternoon. If we weren't playing, we had to go and watch other people playing. I think we had a little bit of free time after sport. We did prep and then we had about an hour and a half of free time before going to bed. Most of our free time was spent in the school or watching TV. There were TV rooms in the boarding houses. We watched the Six Nations rugby in the winter and the cricket in the summer. We got Sky, which was a blessing because I was then able to watch the Cricket World Cup.
70. There was a little bank. Your parents would deposit £50 or something like that. In junior school, once a week we could go to an office and take out £1. It would be on Saturday afternoon when we had a small window of about an hour. The youngest children could spend it at a tuck shop on site. Once you got to a certain age, you could go down town to Woolworths or somewhere like that and buy snacks. At senior school, you could withdraw £5.
71. Each week when I was in third year, older kids would order us to go downtown in our free time and buy them pies. We had to bring them back to them at the TV. Sometimes, we had to use our own money. When we were watching TV, older kids would force us to give up our chairs. Two sixth form pupils used to do this by taking a dictionary from the shelf and then rapping the spine of it down on our heads without warning. Sometimes, they would hit our heads with clenched knuckles to get us to move.

Personal possessions

72. We had very few personal possessions. Boys might have a few snacks, one or two toys and maybe a small radio or games console. The fact that everything was open meant that there was a problem with theft. Things were often stolen without repercussion. It was very distressing. We were all discouraged from having personal possessions, even snacks and things like that, to help prevent theft. It was a tiny minority of boys who committed the thefts, but we always knew who they were. In the junior school, everybody would be called in and told that theft couldn't happen again. The staff powers were limited because there were no witnesses, but they were strict about it. At the senior school, I think the thefts were sometimes reported and a note was made, but that was it. No other action was taken. The view of staff in senior school could sometimes be that it was our fault and that we shouldn't have had things that could be stolen.

Duties/chores

73. In every year, we were assigned duties. They were typed out at the start of the year and posted on a notice board. For example, if we had laundry duties we had to wake up early, go to the other boarding house, pick up stuff and bring it back. Boys were also in charge of waking up other boys up in the morning and inspecting hands and hair. They liked to keep everybody busy. On the positive side, it taught people different responsibilities, skills and leadership.
74. We were in small groups for our duties. Everybody aspired to be a leader or prefect. If you weren't a leader, you were lower down the food chain. It was a strange thing. We had to be aware of when our duties on the rota were changing. If you forgot, you had to hope that other people in the group would remember. The duties were systemised so that they could continue every year, so people would go out, new people would come in and the system remained. Your housemaster would tell you which group you were in and your duties for the next month. The muscle duty would be given to the heads of dorm. They were told to make sure that other kids did the tasks.

75. When we were at the junior school, one of the duties involved going to the senior school to get the post. That was quite a big journey. We had to get up at 6:15 am and walk all the way through Musselburgh. I think it was a good half hour round trip. It was rotated amongst the boys, but you did that duty in pairs. Waking up the boarding house was a one person job. Laundry duties were carried out by four or five boys.
76. Third years had responsibilities, such as bringing out the food, getting the post or going to town at 6:00 am to get the newspapers. There were duties like that and they weren't particularly nice. Imagine being a twelve or thirteen year old and made to get up at 6:00 am when everybody else was sleeping and go into a town where you were scared of being beaten up. There were lots of duties like that. There were also the unofficial duties, dictated by menacing older pupils, such as making coffee for upper sixers at 6:30 am.
77. There was a strict, Victorian ethos handed down possibly by the original headmaster, Hely Hutchinson Almond. The rules were the same every single year. The housemasters knew that children were being sent to do duties, but nobody ever questioned whether it was right to send children to do these jobs, whether it was right that children weren't asleep in their beds.

Trips and Holidays

78. In the senior school, there were some Combined Cadet Force trips. There was one that was renowned for being very violent at a former prisoner of war camp, called Cultybraggan. I don't know what they did there, but it was known to be a weekend of punishment like something out of *Full Metal Jacket*. I somehow managed to get out of that. There was a matron at school. I was the only person who got on with her. I managed to convince her that I couldn't go to Cultybraggan because I had asthma.
79. There were also walking camps in the hills in the Southern Uplands. We were often sent to camps in the Highlands where we would go climbing and canoeing and things like that. We went for some kind of religious retreat too. We went to London in the third form, which was a very nice trip. There were a lot of fun trips. There would still be

bullying amongst your immediate peers, but you were away from the older kids so that kind of abuse stopped.

Birthdays and Christmas

80. They had a list of everyone's birthday. If it was your birthday at the junior school, you got a cake and you got to sit at the top table for lunch, where the headmaster usually sat. You were able to choose who you wanted to sit with you so I was able to invite my brother. You had no limit of friends when it was your birthday. People could be horrible to you every day of the year and then suddenly everybody wanted to be your friend when there was a chocolate cake involved. If you didn't put these people on your limited guest list they would be horribly mean again instantly.
81. In the senior school, if it was your birthday, you would just get beaten to a pulp. It was the tradition. However old you were, you would get that number of punches on your arm. Maybe twenty people would do that to you. During the night, you'd be grabbed from your bed when you were sleeping. You would wake up and wonder what was going on. You'd struggle, but there would be fifth years, fourth years and third years all working together. They'd carry you through the building and throw you into a big tub of cold water. That's how I spent my fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth birthdays.
82. The housemasters were sometimes aware of that practice happening because of the shouting and screaming that went with it. They would sometimes catch people after it had happened and tell everyone to go to bed, but no further action was taken. Sometimes for birthdays – perhaps five times a year – boys were stripped naked and tied to a tree or a bedframe and brought into the foyer at 6:30 am for the whole school to file past and laugh at as they walked in for breakfast. Sometimes it would be by the top table in the dining hall. There were no staff around at that point.

Religious instruction

83. The chapel was at the centre of the school from its development. It was a big, imposing chapel with cherry-wood panels inside, plaques in honour of those who had died in the

Wars, an altar, a massive organ and large, stained-glass windows. It was like a cathedral. The overriding ethos of both schools was the Calvinistic chapel and a very punishment heavy culture. We were very much indoctrinated in singing hymns, confessing our sins and God would do favours for us. In eight years, no amount of prayer ever stopped abuse. One of the school mottos was, "Mind, body and spirit." Mind was the classroom, body was the sports field and spirit was the chapel.

84. On Sundays, we had to wear our kilts. The school was very strict about hair and clothing. We had to have a flower in our button-hole. There would be a massive inspection. We would be preparing all week for the big service on Sunday. We would go off to chapel and spend hours singing, confessing and praying. We were made to feel very guilty. We had to think about what we'd done wrong. It wasn't much fun for young children.
85. The school chaplain was a central figure in the school. He was on the staff and lived at the school full-time. There were three chaplains during my time at Loretto. The chaplain would give a big address on a Sunday. The headmaster would also give an address. The headmasters were always very inspiring figures.
86. We were in the chapel a lot. The boys were awful at singing, the girls were brilliant. The school was very proud of the tradition of singing. We had to go and do concerts at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh and different churches and cathedrals. Hymn practice was three or four times a week and was mandatory.

Visits/Inspections

87. There was a big audit carried out when I went into third year in the senior school. I think it was a body of government school inspectors. They were in the boarding houses and classrooms for weeks. They asked about every aspect of the school. I think they spoke to me at some stage. I remember getting some questions from an inspector, but I can't remember whether it was in the classroom or elsewhere. I can't remember what the questions were. Nobody ever said anything about abuse and things like that. You would be terrified that it would come back to haunt you.

Family contact

88. In junior school, we had a letter writing session every week. In the first two years, that was the only contact we had with the outside. Every Sunday, we would write this letter to our parents and we would get post back. I would say that the letters were heavily monitored. You absolutely had to do it in silence for an hour on a Sunday. The teacher in charge would write some examples on the board of what we should write, "How are you? What's the weather like? I did this on the sports field, lots of love." They would come and check what you were writing. At some point in the hour, the teacher would be looking over your shoulder, reading your letter. Every single letter was looked at. They were checking it was being done properly and that the margins were correct and things like that. It felt a lot like censorship. I can't recall if letter writing was a part of senior school.
89. There was an absolute ban on phone calls, in or out, in my first two years at Loretto. Once, I was caught using the payphone in the town during our shopping hour and was given a hundred line punishment by a prefect. In my final year at junior school, they did allow use of phones. We could get incoming calls two evenings a week. That was a game changer.
90. I remember crying a lot when we had to go back to the school. We only lived 45 minutes away, but we were hardly ever home. There were times when it was very hard. The whole ritual of getting back to school was a very uncomfortable process. You had to pack all your stuff in a certain way. In order to leave the school or get back to the school, we had to dress up in our whole kilt regalia. It was a very uncomfortable thing to wear. It wasn't something to look forward to. I still remember the same tape of classical music in my dad's car, the smell in the car and the silence, driving back for 45 minutes. It would then be six to eight weeks until you got a night at home again.

Healthcare

91. Each boarding house had a matron or the housemaster's wife, who would perform the matron's role. There would be health checks on some week nights and if anything was

wrong, you would just go there. Paracetamol would fix a broken arm. There were sick bays as well if something escalated. The sick bay was in the main house at the junior school and School House in the senior school. I often spent time in the sick bay as I was often ill. It was pretty basic care, but there was a school doctor as well. The school doctor – a lovely guy – was based in a practice in Musselburgh. He was at the senior school pretty much every day as a matter of routine. There was a lot of sport so there was a constant stream of injuries, as well as illnesses.

92. I was thrown down the stairs by an older boy in my first term at Loretto and landed on my ribs. A week or so later, I developed a chest infection. I was really struggling to breathe. I was put into sick bay and given steroids. It was getting to the point where it was becoming dangerous. I was admitted to hospital for two or three nights. I think it might have been the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. It may have just been bronchitis that escalated, but I did tell the staff at the hospital that I had fallen down the stairs. They were very concerned.

Running away

93. I can't remember any specific incidents of anybody running away.

Discipline

94. In the junior school, there was a hierarchy in every dorm. There would be a head of dorm, who would be in their final year. There was an assistant head of dorm as well. They were put in charge of ushering people around, getting them up, getting them showered, lining them up for report and name-taking. I think the head of dorm was a pupil who would be chosen by the housemaster. It was based on them being a responsible person or the alpha male.
95. In my first year, the head of my dorm was also the head of the school. There were prefects who were also usually heads of dorm. There were six or seven prefects chosen from the final year, along with the head of the school. They were typically the alpha males, the best at sport or the best looking. The captain of the rugby team was

the head of school and the vice-captain of the rugby team would be in charge of the other house. There was a sort of top to bottom. The people who were good at sport tended to be captain of everything and head of everything. It's weird how it ends up like that in a male-run environment.

96. When I was aged twelve, prefects who were the same age as me could punish me with fifty to one hundred lines daily. It was a power given to them when they were awarded the title of prefect. I don't know what instructions they were given as I wasn't a prefect. They were trusted completely with that power and I don't think it was ever followed up by staff. It was completely out of control. They could do it if they didn't like you and you had to do it or they would threaten to report you for some made up misdemeanour.
97. In the senior school, there was a head boy, heads of houses and prefects. It was quite a large group of people, maybe fifteen to twenty people from the final year. Below that, there were lots of heads of dorms. In third year, our heads of dorm were in lower sixth. In fourth year, the heads of dorm were fifth formers. The upper sixth formers were never heads of dorm because they were focused on their A levels and in their own rooms but a number of them did visit our dorms on an almost nightly basis for sadistic entertainment.
98. The pupils were left to do a lot of the muscle-work. They were like bouncers. It was a massive problem. I don't know who came up with these rules in the Victorian era. One person did it and then the next person copied and so on. They had this system and nobody ever questioned why we were doing it that way or whether there were alternatives. Children were put in charge of ensuring that it was done in this way. If you didn't do it, you might get a kick, a slap or some other punishment. In the junior school, and even in third year, you might have to write a hundred lines out. It was very punishment heavy with children being the ones dishing out the punishments.
99. The punishments handed out by children were not recorded. It was an absolute power handed out in good faith by the housemasters and staff. Ultimately, they were putting

an adolescent in charge of other kids with varying behavioural disorders, special needs or other anxieties.

100. In junior school, if things got out of control or the head of dorm felt he had no power over you, you would be sent on report to the housemaster. It happened whether it was for something justified or something made up. By that point, you'd be terrified. It was one person's word against another.
101. For formal punishments at the junior school, there was a system of black marks and red marks. At the senior school, if you did something bad, you got a ticket from a staff member or a prefect. If you received a certain number of these tickets then you were obliged to attend the official school punishment. It involved getting up at 6:00 am and then going on an extreme exercise punishment with one of the first XV rugby players. Thirteen year olds were pushed so hard that every morning, some boys would end up crying and vomiting. It was pretty much left up to the prefects to do what they wanted. There didn't seem to be any kind of staff observation. It looked like the most terrifying thing, but thankfully I was never given it in third year.
102. The new headmaster, Keith Budge, introduced a new system of bookings. They must have been recorded somewhere. If you got two bookings, you had to go out and do duties in the yard early in the morning. It was less physical and less abusive, things like litter picks and lighter exercise. The number of punishments handed out increased. They were handed out all over the place. I remember it being a great source of frustration. When you're a teenager, you need your sleep and your mental health. You were being punished for any kind of lateness or answering back or standing up for yourself to staff. It was overwhelming and continued right up until the end of my time at the school. My housemaster's mentality at that time was that punishment would be your redemption. I remember being very frustrated as an eighteen year old, being given these very childish punishments and having no recourse or trial.

Abuse at Loretto

Bullying at junior school

103. I remember most of the boys who were involved in bullying and violence at Loretto. I wouldn't feel comfortable naming them because it happened so long ago, unless I thought somebody was at risk. Memory can be extremely unreliable and the risk of getting a name wrong would have far worse consequences.
104. I had come from a small primary school where everyone was in the same classroom. There was no concept of people being older or younger than you. Everybody was treated the same. My perceptions of this age hierarchy were not in sync with Loretto when I first went there. There was a mentality that people were not allowed to answer back, protest, dispute or engage in any kind of equal way with people who were older than them. I was an outspoken person and I didn't have that concept of hierarchy. I was a stubborn person. If people in authority felt they weren't able to have power over you verbally, they would escalate it into something physical.
105. In my third week at Loretto, there was an announcement that there would be extra rugby practice. I thought it sounded fun so I went along to the practice. When I got to the field, there were just prefects there. I didn't have a concept of ten or eleven year olds not being able to mix with older people. Things went wrong very quickly. They decided to make fun of me and then made me tackle all of them. I did that and then they picked me up and dropped me in a very large puddle and told me to fuck off.
106. A few weeks after the rugby practice, I was dragged into the bathroom by six senior boys, who were prefects. They were the same boys that had dropped me in the puddle at rugby practice. I was ten and they were around thirteen. They held me down, pulled the back of my shirt over my head and then each of them took it in turns to slap my back with open fists. They called it "red hand ganging". I occasionally saw red hand ganging happen to other boys in smaller doses, although I don't have a specific memory of that. I assume because it had a name that it was something passed down from year to year.

107. After the first month at junior school, there began an orchestrated campaign of bullying from my classmates and others, infiltrating every aspect of my life at school, that lasted throughout. Maybe once a week my locker, with all my books and files, would be trashed, and everything jettisoned on the floor. Ink would be splashed across the pages. One time a pot of ink was poured into the pencil case. The ring binders would be opened and hundreds of papers pulled out. They would write abusive words or nicknames on my books or files. Once a week, my pencil case and all its contents would be gone - hidden somewhere in the Victorian building - behind a radiator, in an old cupboard, under books in the library. It would always happen just before the start of prep time or class, to cause maximum disruption. The teaching staff were very caring and would order everyone to look for it or do their best to find replacements for me but it kept on happening every week and added enormous pressure to completing homework and classwork. I would often have to stay longer after the end of prep time to complete the work. Sometimes the kids would look through the window and laugh.
108. There were taunts from pupils of all ages everywhere in the school. You would be shouted at, from close or afar, criticised or mocked for your face, your voice, your size, your interests, your difficulties, told to shut up, fuck off, told you were ugly, told you were friendless, and excluded from games. Not all these things would happen every day or by the same people, but there would be something each day - in the playground, in the teaching block, in the dorms, the washrooms, waiting for meals, or even on the bus to or from sports events. Your personal possessions, such as sports equipment, could be damaged in secret or in front of you. You could be pushed on the ground, in the bushes, spat on, punched or kicked, grabbed around the throat, rapped with knuckles on the head, clipped with a hockey stick, or have a cricket ball thrown at you from a metre away - never in the presence of adults and it never got reported.
109. There was so much unsupervised time and it was such a large campus. If something was said within earshot of staff, the staff member would ask me later if everything was ok, they'd say something nice to boost your morale. I always said everything was ok. The boys picked on people who were vulnerable or different, and I was both. I was physically the smallest. I had serious asthma and eczema in those days. I worked much harder than anyone else, and I wanted no part in cliques. It was only in the final

year of junior school, through sporting success in rugby and cricket, that there was a slight reduction in bullying, but it would come back bigger in the senior school.

110. I remember an incident when I was playing cops and robbers with other boys. It was in my first term at junior school. You had to hide, people would find you and then lead you back to the base. I found an older boy who was in his final year. He threw me down the stairs, a distance of around eight feet. I remember the absolute terror of hurtling through the air. I landed at the bottom on my ribs. I was in a lot of pain. The older boy just laughed and ran away. About a week or so later, I developed a chest infection and was hospitalised. I told the matron that I'd fallen down the stairs, but it may just have been a coincidence that I developed the chest infection.
111. When I was twelve, I was beaten and bullied in my dorm every night for six months by another boy whilst everyone else laughed. The other boy was thirteen. He was egged on by the prefects in charge of the dorm. I cried myself to sleep. One night I was thrown head first into the corner of a bed, causing a large black eye, and beaten repeatedly with a belt. At that point, the housemaster discovered what was happening and it was stopped. I was transferred to another dorm.
112. There was another incident with the thirteen year old boy and I often wake up at night in a sweat about it. We went on a trip to the beach and there were big sand dunes, about eight feet high. I was at the top of one and there was a person at the bottom. The thirteen year old boy pushed me off head first. I had no forewarning. I was half a second away from being dead or quadriplegic, when fortunately the person at the bottom stood up and I became wedged in between them and the sand dune. I often think about that moment. It was like a sliding doors moment in my life.
113. In my first term, the first XV rugby matches took place weekly. All the spectating kids, who were aged eight to thirteen, were made to run to the sea wall at the end of the playing field at half time. It was a tradition. I had no idea what was going to happen the first time we did it. The moment the children passed the club house, the view was obscured by a bank of trees. It turned into a ritual beating where older kids attacked

the younger ones. It was like a war zone with kids in their final two years smashing the younger kids to the ground.

114. The staff didn't see what happened. I don't know what they thought was going on. There were nice staff and I don't believe they would have allowed it to go on if they had seen it. If they had seen it, they would have been seen by the children and the children would not have behaved that way.
115. On one of these runs to the sea wall, three boys, aged thirteen, attacked my nine year old brother. It was in September 1991. They threw him onto the floor. One of them kicked him as hard as he could in the testes. I remember who he was but I don't want to name him. He was wearing wellington boots and kicked him five times. My brother's testes were so bloody and damaged that he had to go for an operation. They were swollen and bleeding and one of his testes had gone up and become stuck. The school investigated what had happened, but there was no expulsion for the perpetrator.
116. After sport, children would force other children into a small locker in the corner of the changing rooms. They would take out their deodorant cans and empty them into all the air holes. There might have been five people doing this at a time. It happened a lot, probably twice every week. I remember being shoved in the lockers a few times. Some people coughed up blood when they came out. It could so easily have resulted in death.
117. When I was thirteen, a friend of mine made an innocent remark to a prefect. I was around the corner and I did not witness the incident directly. Everyone who was there came running out and said what had just happened. The prefect smashed my friend's head four times off the tile floor until he fell into a fit and foamed at the mouth. Another prefect alerted the SNR CRS, but I'm not aware of the perpetrator being punished.

Fagging, prefects and bullying at the senior school

118. The bullying went on for the whole eight years that I was at Loretto. The bullying that I had experienced at the junior school transcended into the senior school. Even though there was a big change of guard, a different campus, different houses and a huge influx of people from other schools, the physical and mental bullying was passed on. There was no escape from it. I think I was in the sick bay for my first two weeks of senior school. I remember getting out and going to the classroom for the first time. It was the first introduction I had to a lot of the new people from other schools. I was hoping that things might change. I remember opening the door and one of the new people said, "Why couldn't you just die?" It was clear that the people that I'd grown up with at the junior school had told everyone that I was a target and not to be liked. The bullying spread and increased.
119. The fagging that took place at mealtimes took place throughout the whole domestic side of the school. It was entirely pupil oriented. The unofficial side of it was overwhelming and constant, where pupils held that power over people who were younger than them. It was in all aspects of boarding and mealtimes. It was just what you had to do. There was no way that you could say, "I'm not doing this." You would be beaten up. You could be out in the middle of the sports field, but if a sixth year told you to get his watch from the other side of campus, or eat twenty bananas in front of the dining table and then vomit it up, or handover a personal possession for them to keep, you had to. It was a form of slavery.
120. Fagging was widespread. Boys would be told to go down town. It was quite unnerving to go out of the school because we only went occasionally. We were quite shielded from the outside. We would be sent out to buy food or drinks for older pupils, sometimes with our own pocket money. You could be sitting watching TV in your leisure time and somebody would shout, "Oi, scab, go down town and buy me a pie."
121. The phrase I heard over and over and over again was, "It was way worse in my day." I don't know which sick person started this, but it was copied and copied and copied. It was how the older boys would justify their behaviour.

122. In the senior school, someone from lower sixth form was usually in charge at prep time. It was a point at which people were beaten and tortured. Even if it wasn't the person in charge, other sixth years could enter the room. I assume it was done to these people when they were in third year. There was a huge list of very strange and sadistic rituals. They were never written down anywhere. It just happened every single year.
123. On one occasion, one of the sixth years brought a BB gun into prep time. We sat in absolute terror with this gun pointed at us for two hours. Somebody was shot in the face. Mercifully it missed his eye by about a centimetre. We would be hit randomly during prep time with the spine of a book on the head, or ruler on the knuckles, or punched on the arm. I think the staff were supposed to be circulating around the building during prep. There was a rota for it. It might be the assistant housemaster or an assistant tutor. They might pop in. The only time the sadists were afraid was if they thought that a staff member was about to come in. For that reason, when they were doing their torturing they would often make it be in absolute silence. It was just a very weird moment that sixth years took as an opportunity to ritualistically harm and torture younger people.
124. Once, a guy came down to my prep room. Somebody had made a noise whilst he was in the toilet or something like that. He knew it was someone from our room. We all had to lie on the floor with our hands and fingers out. He spent an hour just walking over our legs, heads, backs, fingers. If you made a sound, he would do it again. There was another sixth year in charge who allowed this to happen.
125. If you have a percentage of people with behavioural disorders and a group of three hundred, you are going to have a certain number of people who are sadistic or have psychopathy. In addition to that, there will be people with learned behavioural disorders as a result of a toxic environment like this.
126. When my brother was in third year, a fourth year boy punched him in the mouth. He took a big smack and it damaged my brother's two front teeth. His teeth went black within 24 hours. He had to have them capped. I believe the school made the

perpetrator's parents pay for the dental work. I think the school would have taken what happened seriously, but I don't know what the punishment was.

127. At night time, the people in charge of dorms would pick on younger kids. In addition, there would be different sixth years coming into the dorms for that reason every night, but it would be the same three or four weaker people that they went after. It was very ritualistic. There were multiple levels to it. There was the prep environment and the dormitory environment. People would also announce that things were going to happen. They would say, "Guess what's happening on Thursday? This is the night that the fourth years are going to come into your room and beat the shit out of you guys. Get ready." It was like *The Purge*. This was the sort of thing that happened on the same night every year. The older people would be preparing for that violence and announce it to put fear into the third years. I remember us trying to barricade ourselves in. There was no getting out of it. After they'd broken into the dorm, the sixth years in charge of the dorm stood aside and let it happen. We wet the floor so they all fell over and slipped across the surface. It was like a scene from *Home Alone*.
128. When they got back up, they started running around the room, whipping people and beating us with pillow cases stuffed with shoes. They rolled towels and wet the end for maximum force. It could literally rip flesh open, it was so powerful. They would flip our beds over. There was this mad, insane violence but they said it was tradition. I don't know who started it, but it was very weird and it was the last year it ever happened in our house.
129. Another time, some fifth year boys used a lighter and a deodorant can as a flame thrower and turned it on another boy before bed. His dressing gown burst into flames and he had to rip it off. He was fortunate only his hair and eyebrows were singed. His dressing gown was destroyed.
130. When I was aged thirteen to fourteen, the beds in our dorm would be flipped upwards against the wall during the night while we lay there. That happened at least once a week. You would fall to the floor, head first, trapped between the wall and the mattress in the darkness. Our sheets and clothes, which were in the sliding drawer underneath

the bed, would also be tumbling. We would be shouted at if we made any noise when we came out and tried to fix the beds. People would say things like, "I'm going to kill you when you come out of there." Once, my hand got trapped between the bed frame and the sliding drawer and it almost severed my index finger. My finger was squeezed down to the bone, but fortunately the skin wasn't broken and I didn't need any medical treatment.

131. There was a boy in lower sixth year whose room neighboured our dorm in Pinkie House. He would steal from us whenever he fancied. Once a week or so when I was in my third year, he made us stand in pairs ten metres away, facing him. We weren't allowed to move. He would take a hockey stick and ball and take five to fifteen shots at us until one of us was hit. The dorm was about one hundred feet long and had very large windows at one end. This went on throughout my third year on at least a weekly basis. Every time, someone would be injured. Sometimes he would use a cricket bat and ball. Five or six other sixth years used to come in and do the same thing. I would lie in my bed in absolute silence, hoping I wouldn't be made to get out of bed but they almost always called for me.
132. On one occasion, the same boy tied a dressing gown cord around my thirteen year old brother's waist. He made him climb out a tiny, five hundred year old window onto a small stone ledge, four storeys up. My brother would have died instantly if he'd fallen. The sixth former took one end of the dressing gown cord and trapped it in the window as he closed it. When he let my brother back in five minutes later, he tugged on the cord and it snapped. I didn't witness this incident and learned about it after my brother and I had left school. This boy later ran for Parliament.
133. I was regularly beaten by the sixth formers who were put in charge of my dorm, as well as five or six senior boys in the house. Sometimes they would kick me in the stomach and once they threw me face first into my bed frame, cutting my mouth. I could be thrown against the wall, choked, made to lie on the floor while they sat on me or put furniture on top of me. They would say things like, "This is your fault." There were many nights when the sixth formers would get the rest of the dorm to sneak up to my bed during the night and then start punching me at the same time for one minute.

There were fourteen others in the dorm – maybe half of them would participate. That level of violence was mainly directed towards three of us.

134. There were three parts to the dorm. There were the popular, sporty people who got on very well. There were the two heads of dorm in the middle of the room, who were in lower sixth form. At the other end of the dorm were the least popular people. The people at the top of the dorm picked on the other people every day. It could be physical or verbal bullying. It was often premeditated and you could hear them planning attacks – like how they were going to tie us to our bed frames then hoist us in the air and crucify us for a night. When the sixth formers came in, they picked anybody from the middle to the bottom of the dorm. They never did it to the more popular people at the top of the dorm, and never to the people who had older brothers in the sixth form.
135. Many sixth formers would enter the dorm at random and start a game of “heads, bollocks, toes”. We had to lie flat in our beds or on the floor whilst they raised a hockey stick above us. They would then swing down hard and at the last second shout, “heads”, “bollocks” or “toes”. We were then allowed to move only that part of our body to avoid being hit, whilst staying on the bed. They would then switch to “opposites” and continue until we were hit. This would happen for about ten minutes on almost a daily basis in third year. They turned many of these abuses into games.
136. Often the fifth and sixth years would beat us at random moments. They would kick us in the groin or the stomach as we walked past or give us punishments. There was a very strange mantra. People would say, “It’s because you’re being arrogant,” or, “Stop being arrogant.” We had to be subservient to older pupils and that was what they would say to justify their violence or verbal abuse.
137. Fifth and sixth formers would force us to wake up at 3:00 am, leave the boarding house, sneak across the grounds, break into another boarding house and then burst into another sixth year’s room. We had to take his duvet, at which point we would be caught and beaten again. If we weren’t successful, the sixth years would make us do it again the next night, or pay them £5 from our pocket money to cancel the punishment. It could happen three or four nights in a row.

138. Abuse happened often in the dorms in third, fourth, fifth and even lower sixth year. People would urinate on your bed or put shaving foam or toothpaste in it. You'd get into bed and realise what had happened and everybody would be laughing, then you'd be told to shut up and try and figure this out in the darkness. That happened to me at least once a term. It also happened to others.
139. One morning in third form, I woke up to see what looked like blood all over my pillow. A sixth year had come into the dorm during the night and dyed two thirds of my hair bright red. He said he did it because he hated me. It took three months for it to grow out. I don't think any of the staff noticed as it was right at the end of term. He definitely wasn't punished.
140. For the Combined Cadet Forces, our boots had to be polished enough to be able to see our reflection in them. It took three weeks of work to achieve this. We were beaten and shouted at by older children put in charge of inspection for this the whole time. We were forced to get up at 4:00 am to polish them. The night before inspection, one of the inspectors went around the desks while we were sleeping and scratched the boots with a compass. We were then either kicked or forced to pay him to give us more time. In fourth year, I paid someone £10 to paint mine. At the official CCF parade, the army officer and the headmaster were amazed. They said I had the shiniest boots in the whole school and well done for all the hard work.
141. In third form, I remember being forced inside a chest, which was then locked. It was rolled over and over again. It was taken to the top of a spiral staircase where people feigned to push me down. They then put one of my friends in there and our assistant head of dorm launched it down the stairs. He went down ten steps and then it blocked against the wall. If it had continued down, it would have killed him. I also remember being put inside a duvet cover on two occasions and beaten while I was lifted up. Everyone was shouting about how they were putting me out of the window, which was four storeys off the ground.

142. For my fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth birthdays, about fifteen people would grab me in the bed at night, punch me and then carry me through the building. They would throw me into a bath of cold water. For my seventeenth birthday, my classmates threatened for several days that they were going to come into my study at night and spray paint my hair black. There were no locks on the doors. I slept the night of my birthday inside a desk in one of the prep rooms to escape it, but they just came the next night. Six of them burst in, grabbed me in my bed, beat me and dyed my hair black, all carried out in an eerie silence. For my eighteenth birthday, I was grabbed by five classmates in the School House foyer while heading for breakfast. They tried to strip me naked and they said their plan was to throw me in a kitchen trolley, wheel me into the dining room and put me on display in front of the whole school. I managed to wrestle free and run back to the boarding house, missing breakfast.
143. On one occasion in my fourth year, another pupil came up behind me with a large sock. I was just walking through the boarding house and he started strangling me. I didn't really know what to do. I couldn't speak. I remember walking, hoping he was going to stop. I remember fainting on the staircase. I think the boy did it as a joke. He thought I was joking when I fainted and gave me a kick. It was a very strange incident.
144. One of the weird things about the bullying was that it taught people to develop a sense of humour. It was a coping and survival mechanism. When the pack is against you, if you can make people laugh in that moment of high tension, it has a disarming effect. One teacher noticed that things were not going well for me. I tried to explain that I felt pressure to be funny. Only years later I realised that I developed that behaviour. Britain has produced a lot of comedians. I bet many of them would disclose a history of bullying. If you got it wrong and said something that was not funny, then the abuse would be a lot worse.
145. I remember freezing in one GCSE English exam. I was just so rattled by bullying I couldn't put pen to paper. I just sat there for 90 minutes. There were two exams for English. I got zero per cent in this one but I still managed to scrape a pass in the subject based on the first exam. It happened again in another French A-level module. After a few minutes I just couldn't do it anymore.

146. There was an incident at a field trip to a forest reserve in the Highlands in 1998 when I was in lower sixth form. I was standing on a rock in a river. The boys in my class started to pick up rocks and throw them at me. I think the objective for most of them was to try and knock me into the river. One boy was very deliberately trying to hit me. I couldn't get away. I was surrounded by a river and a mob. One of the rocks hit me on the elbow. I thought it was broken. It was one of the most painful things I've ever experienced, but I didn't seek any medical treatment. The girls were horrified and tried to comfort me. The staff weren't far away, but they didn't see what happened.
147. I don't think the staff saw what was going on generally. Boys were very clever at hiding, both the perpetrators and the victims. The moment a staff member was present or within earshot, things would just stop. Ironically, when I was in first year at the school, the school play was *Lord of the Flies*. I remember the final scene, when the boys have killed Piggy and another boy is running for his life and being chased by the pack. He falls down at the feet of an adult. The whole play was acted by boys in the school. At the end, the history teacher was on stage dressed in full Navy uniform and said, "What's going on here, boys?" The lights went out. It was a very good metaphor for the behaviour at the school.
148. Occasionally, there were attacks on pupils in the town centre by kids who lived in Musselburgh. They could see the red uniforms a mile off and then attack as a gang, sometimes - in the very worst cases - with bike chains or pipes. When I was fourteen or fifteen, a friend and I were attacked coming out of Woolworth's one day. A gang of eight kids surrounded me and one boy punched me in the head seven times. We couldn't fight back. Shoppers just stopped to watch. One old man shouted, "Get off him!" We ran back towards the school, with them chasing us and continuing to punch us. They didn't dare come through the gates. This was reported to the housemaster, as all attacks in the town were, and then the police, who were called to take statements.
149. At one point, there was an escalation of violence and attacks in the town and we were told by the school to stop going there for a while, or we required permission to go downtown, and the police were patrolling more.

150. One weekend, in maybe 1996 or 1997, four sixteen to seventeen year old boys from the town came onto the school grounds looking for a fight. A confrontation with pupils of the same age began in the woods. There were no staff around. Word spread very quickly on the campus and about thirty or forty kids just started running towards the scene to see what was happening. I think the local boys threw the first punch and then a fight broke out. It was four local boys against six Loretto boys. I don't remember exactly who was involved. Two of the local boys ran off and two were left on the ground while the Loretto boys kicked them in the stomach and backside repeatedly. I remember screaming, "Stop it!" but everyone was transfixed. After about thirty seconds of savage violence, the last two local boys managed to scramble to their feet and ran off. It was never reported. I remember the school mob running back from it. They were so excited and triumphant. Someone shouted, "I smell poverty!" and they all laughed. I felt so crushed and angry. I remember thinking, "What the fuck is wrong with boys? How can they be so evil?"
151. The bullying mentality was also directed towards the staff in the senior school. A lot of staff were hounded. I know that some of them left and a lot of them must have had breakdowns. Some of the boys always wanted a victim. It excited them on some level. They were able to whip each other up into some kind of frenzied level and scream abuse at certain staff members. They targeted people who were judged to be less good looking or had a different voice or something like that. It was often very misogynistic. It was a really nasty mentality. They would come up with some nickname and scream it across the courtyard. They would be very disruptive in class and make some teachers' lives hell. I remember at least two staff members looking absolutely miserable and leaving pretty soon after joining. Some boarding house matrons had it really hard.
152. After Keith Budge took over, some of the kids in their final year went to a local bar. It wasn't safe for them to be there. They were there with some tutors from New Zealand. The door was locked in the pub and there was some kind of fight, I believe. The police were called. The tutors were fired from the school and about to be returned to New Zealand. We were in assembly and the head of school asked for the pupils to stay behind. The whole upper sixth form wasn't happy about the tutors being kicked out.

There started a petition, which we were all made to sign, and threatened to boycott the end of year ceremony. The head boy went to Keith Budge, who backed down. He said he had decided to let the tutors stay, not because of the threats from pupils, but he had clearly been put in an impossible position. It was a good example of the mob mentality.

153. There was only one time I ever heard of a staff attack on a pupil. A former staff member, who I can't remember, said that another staff member tried to hit a boy with his car while driving through the school grounds. I don't know what year this would have been in. I think it would have been reported for the other staff to know. I know that the staff member involved resigned very suddenly in [REDACTED]. An emergency school meeting was called by the headmaster, Keith Budge. We were all told not to talk about the resignation, but we wouldn't be told what it was about. I don't know if it was about this incident, or something else inappropriate.
154. On the final night of the school year in 1995, when I was in third year, the upper sixth formers were leaving. The school didn't have any power over them anymore. There was a full on riot at the school. It was like *Mad Max*. Staff couldn't protect us. We knew it was coming and we barricaded ourselves into our dorm. The upper sixers burst in and turned powder and water fire hydrants on us. They then flipped up every bed against the wall with people in them. We could hear screaming and shouting all night and things being smashed. They pushed over the screens at the cricket field. We could hear things breaking all over the place. The school was trashed. Windows were smashed, there was graffiti and they super-glued coins to the headmaster's windows. Cars were vandalised. Boats were broken. I remember a staff member coming in when the shouting started to ask if everyone was okay. I think the staff were probably running around the school, trying to stop people. These boys wouldn't be stopped. They had just decided they were going to do what they wanted.
155. The volume of daily mental abuse and taunts, where people's childhoods could be ruined by some sick nickname and persecution, and traditional bullying, involving headlocks, punches and death threats, was even more than I have described. If

someone decided to trash or hurt you, the others rallied around the perpetrator to save themselves. It was relentless.

Sexual abuse

156. There were a lot of incidents of boys in upper sixth form exposing themselves to junior boys in Hope House. I remember it happened in the dining room once. A boy put his penis in a roll and then offered it to a third year. When I was in third year, there were three or four boys in upper sixth year who were completely out of control. They were exposing themselves on a daily basis, but people who were in Hope House would know more about that than me.
157. There was an incident when three or four boy exposed themselves to some members of the public. I think there may even have been a child present. The police got involved and took it very seriously. It became a major drama in the school. They called an emergency meeting and everybody had to go to the dining room. I remember a senior member of staff explaining that there had been an accusation about this thing happening and that nobody was to talk to journalists. I'm not sure who the staff member was. I remember them saying that a journalist might phone or turn up at the school and we all had to make no comment. I think the boys got away with it in the end. I got the impression that the level of publicity could be very harmful to the school. The boys, of course, completely denied it.
158. The most serious abuse I know of took place in Seton House. I didn't witness it, but I am certain that it did happen. The fifth years in charge of the third years beat a boy, pinned him on the floor, took a snapped metal towel rail and then forced it up his anus in front of the others in the dorm. I had heard that the fifth years in charge at Seton House were incredibly violent. The boy who was assaulted was in my year. I found out about that after I left school. I can't remember who told me, but I heard about it from two or three different people who would have been in Seton House at the time. I think the type of abuse that was happening to me was happening in all the boys' boarding houses.

Reporting of abuse at Loretto

159. I was bullied for quite a long time by a thirteen year old boy when I was twelve. On one occasion, I had a black eye after he threw me into a bed. I remember going to the classroom block. Somebody must have mentioned something by that time because the housemaster was sitting there and asked me directly how I got the black eye. I told him what had happened and he took it very seriously. I'm not sure whether what I told him was recorded or what the process was. Whilst he couldn't prevent every single instance of bullying, he did always take it very seriously. I was moved to a different dorm at the other end of the boarding house straight away. The boy who had bullied me was punished, but I don't know what his punishment was.
160. There was still some bullying going on after that, albeit on a much lower scale. The pupils would not dare misbehave in the presence of the housemaster. He had a zero tolerance policy. He checked on me a lot after that incident. He clamped down on it. I'm very thankful for that.
161. When my brother had to have the operation on his testes, the school investigated what had happened. I don't know which staff member conducted the investigation, but I am certain that the SNR [REDACTED] the junior school, CRS [REDACTED], would have been aware of it. Everybody knew who was responsible. I don't know what the perpetrator's defence was. He was a violent person who seemed to come from a troubled place. I assume I was asked what happened or what I had seen, but I wasn't present for any meeting that took place with my brother or the perpetrator. My parents were informed about my brother's injuries.
162. There was terrible physical evidence that my brother had been beaten up, but there was no suspension or expulsion for the perpetrator. He was somebody you had to be careful with. It felt like he could kill somebody. A few months afterwards, I saw him attack somebody with a hockey stick, beating him around the legs. I reported that incident and at that point the boy was suspended. His behaviour didn't change after that. I don't know what he's like as an adult, but I think he probably needed medication

and a lot of help. It was back in the days when maybe that level of treatment and understanding wasn't widespread.

163. I don't think anybody ever complained to staff about fagging. You would be terrified to do so. When you're in a boarding house with fifty to seventy people, all of those people would turn against you if you made a fuss, whether you were morally right or not. It was almost animalistic, like a pack of dogs.
164. When I look back as an adult, I can't say for certain that the staff knew what was going on. In the junior school, it appeared there was much more care and with its smaller size, it was more manageable. In the senior, some staff must have known that fagging happened, some must have caught boys in bullying situations, but I don't think they knew how bad it was. On some level, I think they thought it was an acceptable part of growing up. A lot of them must have gone to boarding school themselves so they probably had it too. I think there was a sort of ethos of, "Boys will be boys." But sometimes the top of the dorm has no idea how bad the bottom of the dorm has it. Everyone told themselves a story that things like this were normal and okay. Who wants to admit they are part of daily, institutional child abuse? To put a complete stop to this shit, they would have to expel half the boys. It was endemic.
165. It was like two separate worlds. The staff were very good to average and, on the whole, very nice people. I have no moral complaints about the life of the school in the classroom. When the staff were not there, or they turned their backs, it was a completely different world. That world was the overwhelming majority of time. The one thing I do question at the senior school relates to the housemasters and how much they could have known. How much did they just take the view that this is the way it is or "boys will be boys"? Is there any possible way, with these kinds of abuses spanning hundreds of years, that people didn't know?
166. There were a couple of occasions when I did report bullying. One of the occasions was when I was moved dorm in the junior school. The other occasion was to my housemaster in the senior school. A boy in my year and house, who bullied me relentlessly for eight years, flipped my bed over and told me he would kill me if I came

to rugby practice. I missed the practice as a result. My housemaster was my rugby coach at the time and asked me why I had missed practice. I told him what had happened. He did take it very seriously. He recorded the incident and spoke to the other boy. He also kept an eye on me for a few weeks after that, but it was really just the tip of the iceberg.

167. I did feel the staff took my complaints about bullying very seriously. They were nice about that. I can't complain on any professional or personal level about that. I do think that it was such an all-enveloping thing, when this structure, environment and ethos was seven days out of seven, sixteen, seventeen hours a day. There were just a few hours when people were sleeping and even then things can happen. At some point, you wonder how a housemaster can deal with it? They had fifty to seventy people in their care, their own families and they were worried about getting pupils through exams. It was an overwhelming job and it couldn't be done by one person. There must have been a level at which they just let things go.
168. The volume of material being processed by teachers was probably overwhelming too. If prep wasn't handed in, there were some very nice teachers who would occasionally ask whether something was going on. Occasionally, I told staff that I was upset or things weren't going well or that I couldn't tolerate the volume of work. One or two were wonderfully understanding and told me to do the work at a pace I felt comfortable with. I don't think any of them knew at any stage that you were having to do this work in what was essentially an environment of torture and that you had mentally cracked.
169. You were bound by a strange omerta whereby you could never tell the adults what was happening to you. When you're in a child's mind, you think that if you tell, things will get much worse for you. That's always a huge barrier for children who are being bullied to overcome. In a boarding school environment, it's particularly difficult because you're locked away, there are no parents, you're going to be there all night every night, for seven days a week. The older boys held this power over you because they were physically much stronger than you and they were able to call on this sort of pack mentality. If you were to resist, they could turn the rest of the pack against you. It was strange, sick and animalistic.

170. Norman Drummond left when I was in my first year at the upper school in 1995. I hold him in the very highest regard, as I do all the headmasters in my time at the school. CRS and Keith Budge were also outstanding people. I would never put any blame onto them. I do not believe there's a bad bone in their bodies. If they'd known abuse was going on, they would have put a stop to it on some level. I do have a memory of Norman Drummond calling a school assembly about the fagging. Someone must have brought it to his attention and he said that it had to stop immediately. At the end of the day, headmasters had to entrust control to teachers and housemasters, who were entrusting control to pupils, who were entrusting control to other pupils. There was no way of controlling what was going on. Unsupervised boys on that scale are uncontrollable.
171. I never wanted to tell my parents what was happening at Loretto. I felt that I had to make a success of it for them. I had to work as hard as I could and do as well as I could. I didn't want to upset them. They never asked me to do that, but in my mind they were making all these enormous sacrifices to send me there. I don't recall talking to my brother about what was happening until we'd both left the school.

Leaving Loretto

172. I left Loretto in June 1999. After I left, I went to work at home. I then went to work in Australia. I went to play a season of cricket in Sydney and worked there as a removal person, lollipop man and dishwasher. It was very liberating in one sense, but in another sense I felt like a total idiot. I didn't even know how to get on a bus. It was strange to go through eight years of supposedly the best schooling and you don't know how to do ordinary things.

Life after leaving school

173. I travelled around a little bit, trying to forget about boarding school as much as possible and learn about life. I tried to get some sort of work or career going. I went to university

in Wales. I heard on the radio that they were offering the world's first degree in flying saucers. I thought it would make wonderful writing material. The course was fantastic. I studied environmental philosophy, space studies, science fiction, creative writing, psychology, environmental law and media studies. My passion at that time was writing books. I wanted to write travel books as a career. I'd already started writing my dissertation before my first week at university. I wrote two manuscripts while I was there.

174. I managed to graduate with a first class honours in combined studies. There was a board at Loretto of people who went on to get first class honours. It was situated in School House as you went into the dining room. It was rare because it wasn't an academically driven school. I did have a dream that it would say, HLB Paranormal Studies." I don't believe my name ever went up there.
175. I wrote three book manuscripts, the third of which was published. It was a success on a lot of levels. My wife is Canadian so I moved to North America. I worked various jobs, including an assistant editor of a magazine, a gardener and a door to door salesman. After that, I ended up working as a maintenance person for my mother-in-law. I now run an events business with my wife, which has been a big success. I've coached about five thousand school kids cricket over the years.

Impact

176. My brother and I talked about Loretto after we left. He says that things seemed to be worse for me than for him. It wasn't a rosy thing at all for him. I remember having a massive discussion with a friend of ours who went to Eton in the sixties. His jaw hit the table as my brother and spoke about what had happened at Loretto. He said it sounded much worse than Eton in the 1960s. I suspect these things happen in almost every boys' boarding school. It was the first time we talked about what had happened. On some sort of level, we laughed about it when we were in our early twenties. It's strange how your perception changes over time from being a ten year old to an eighteen year

old to a liberated twenty-four year old to being a parent. The way I look back at it now is very different from the way I looked back at it twelve years ago. It makes me so sad.

177. The pain and discomfort of growing up in the environment of a cold, regimented and Calvinistic Scottish school seven days out of seven, utterly devoid of love and comfort is impossible to shake. I was very depressed throughout my time at Loretto, as were a small number of boys in every year and every boarding house. I had many thoughts of suicide during my time there and after. There were many times when other boys knew this. They laughed about it and carried on. It led to six nervous breakdowns. Only later in life have I gained more cognitive understanding and a deeper perspective of what was going on.
178. I sought professional counselling around the time I had my first two children in my late twenties. I hadn't really looked at boarding school in the same way up until that point. Things changed biologically and my perspective changed. I didn't know how profound an effect it had had on me up until that point. I was explaining these things to someone from Canada who must have wondered what the fuck was wrong with people in Britain. I didn't go to the counsellor exclusively because of what happened at boarding school. I had young children and my sleep pattern and lifestyle had changed greatly. There were incidences of adult bullying in Canada that I had a very hard time processing. On some level, it took me back to my time at boarding school and the idea of people holding power over you, using it in a mean way and rallying people against you.
179. I think I try to shun the experience as much as possible. When I think about it, I think of it as being another time and another continent. Many of my peers from school are messed up and have sought help over the years. Many of them don't remember. Most of them hang out together. I was one of the black sheep who said it wasn't for me.
180. In terms of preparation for a career, I felt that the type of education and the environment of incarceration and cult-like mentality made me completely unprepared for what was expected when I left school. I was completely unprepared to live what is expected as a normal life. My peers were in the same position. We were obviously very privileged people and had been given things other people could only dream of, in

terms of education and opportunity. We were useless at getting a job or building a career. The expectations and preparations were so far removed from normal life.

181. I had never been on a bus until I left school. I think we spent an hour talking about CVs in eight years. I had to learn these things the hard way when I moved to the other side of the world. There was definitely something wrong with the environment at Loretto when it came to preparing people for life, as it is in many boarding schools. We were the very last year in the history of the school that didn't have girls. I remember the fear of chatting to girls. We were weird people, lost boys. I think most people have turned out fairly normal now, but it has been hard for them. I know of many school colleagues who have also suffered breakdowns and sought psychological help. I hope that the perpetrators have changed.
182. On a positive note, I feel very fortunate to have had the good experiences and the breadth of experiences I had at boarding school. People who weren't fortunate to have gone through private schooling didn't have the same opportunities that I had in sport. I feel very lucky that I had such opportunities. I also feel lucky that it taught me some positive skills, such as communication skills, writing skills and educational skills. I still get on very well with a lot of the staff. Norman Drummond, in particular, inspired me to go and create bold projects and contribute to the community.
183. While I have huge respect for many of my teachers and am still in touch with some and am thankful for many of the opportunities my schooling provided, opportunities that many people can only dream of, and understand the extreme financial sacrifices my parents made and their good intentions in sending me to Loretto, I wouldn't even think of sending my children to boarding school.

Reporting of abuse after leaving Loretto

184. I've never reported what happened to the police. For me, what's done is done. I can't undo what happened to me. I believe that the world has changed and that boarding school changed dramatically for the years below me. If you spoke to somebody who

had been there five years after me, it would be a completely different story. I did think of writing a book about my experiences at one point. Maybe it would make a better Netflix series.

185. I never wanted my parents to know about the abuse. I also have a fear of things getting worse or getting into more trouble if I report what happened to the police. On some level, I do have sympathy for the perpetrators as well. I don't want to make their lives hell. They were children at the time so they weren't legally responsible. I do believe that they were morally responsible. However, these people have jobs and families and children. It would create a lot of pain for them and their families and that's not something I would wish to put onto somebody else.
186. Most people do not want to hear about abuse at boarding schools. It elicits a very strong and negative reaction much of the time. They can become very aggressive, almost like an aggressive defensive mechanism. They'll say things like, "This is absolute nonsense," or, "It was never like this at my school," or, "My child had a wonderful time. It never happened." Sometimes people think because it happened at a fee-paying school and they see your parents as rich, boo hoo for you.

Records

187. I've never gone back to the school in decades and I don't have any records from my time there, apart from my exam certificates. When I was captain of sports teams, I had to write match reports. I would have a laugh at them and at my school essays. In terms of my personal records, it would be interesting to see my grades collapse. I am sure some teachers thought I was disruptive in my final years but they had no idea why.

Lessons to be learned

188. I don't think what happened at Loretto was unique to our school. When you are in a live-in community, run by teenage boys, with staff who aren't paid to care outside of

the classroom, a *Lord of the Flies* mentality rules. There was no chance of escape and no one cared. At the end of the day, you would be in a dorm with sadists all night, every night. The abusive behaviour was passed down every year, big monkey beating up on little monkey, beating up on littler monkey and so on.

189. I could never understand how boys could be so cruel, so detached and so devoid of empathy. Those, like me, who tried to break the cycle were a powerless minority. Most people, like pack animals, followed the alpha male, who would be the strongest and cruellest and in some cases, a psychopath. There were probably three to six boys in every boarding house with consistent sociopathic traits and they set the tone. Many of the kids had been living away from home from the age of eight. This was their family. Parents were just people they spent Christmas and holidays with.
190. I think it's a different world now. It started to become very different one year after me. That's not to say that these things can't happen again because history has a horrible way of repeating itself.
191. The living accommodation improved while I was at Loretto. There may have been pressure because other schools were doing this and they had to keep up. The biggest change was the girls coming in. It completely transformed the school, although it took a few years for them to filter through. There were all sorts of market pressures on the school. I believe the school changed after I left and became more of a day school. I think they only have one boarding house now. There were rapid societal and economic changes combining to improve the situation.
192. Many things have changed. Governments have legislated about children's welfare. There were great improvements to that. I'm sure there were directives from the European Union, from the Westminster government and the Scottish Government. Knowledge and education of child psychology has advanced light years. The Inquiry in itself is the first of its kind. It is a very necessary thing and an enlightening thing. As hard as it is, progress comes from this kind of enlightenment.

193. I think that schools have to be co-educational. The greatest improvement at Loretto was girls going into every year. It completely changed the dynamic. Something goes deeply wrong when boys are left alone. They have hormones coursing through them. It doesn't seem to be the same for girls. You would want everybody to grow up with normal relationships.
194. The school motto was, "You have inherited Sparta. Use it." This seemed to have been developed a long time ago. I was at the very final years of this ethos. I don't know who came up with the thinking, but the view was that it was good for boys to be in a tough environment, that they needed a beating, that they needed to be woken up at 6:00 am and running around this place. The mentality was, "This is the best education that can happen for boys because it happened to me."
195. In the minds of boys, we were like disposable utensils that could be insulted and humiliated, used, beaten and then tossed aside. It could be done for many reasons – boredom, a thirst for violence, spectacle, laziness, humour, or to exercise hierarchy. The ultimate aim of abusers, whether they knew it or not, was to have complete control over you – ironically, in mind, body and spirit. And the more you resisted, the more they abused.
196. I wish the school had prepared people more for life. I wish that throughout we had been able to mix and socialise with people who lived in the town and do more community service. I wish we invited people from the town into the grounds. If we'd been able to have more choice in our everyday behaviour and been able to get jobs, that would have been fantastic. Instead, we were trapped away in this weird campus with a church in the middle of it.
197. The level of incarceration and isolation should not happen. When children get to seventeen, eighteen, they need to be going outside the school and seeing friends, as any other adolescents would. I believe children should be with families, at the very least at weekends and at the very least with surrogate families. There were many children whose parents lived on the other side of the world, in Brunei and Korea. I was 45 minutes away, but I still never saw my parents. I don't agree with boarding school,


but if it has to happen there's no good reason for boys to be locked up at the weekends. I think children need to be with families. I think that's a huge part of emotional and educational stability and growth. The alternative to that is getting education from locked up children. That is wrong on many levels.

198. I'm not a child psychologist, but I think it would be sensible to have a minimum age for children to go to boarding school. Children can be very fragile. If a child is eight or nine years old, even if there is no abuse, on some level, whether they know it or not, going to boarding school is a traumatising experience. I don't know what age that would be.
199. Some people have great experiences at boarding school. However, I think that on the whole – certainly in the past – it has been a miserable experience for millions of people and that has been swept under the carpet. If a school is doing anti-bullying programmes once a year or once a week, it's still not enough. It needs to be rooted out. People are very good at keeping secrets, the abusers and the victims. Bullying is always going to be there unless there is an almost authoritarian way of stamping it out. There needs to be complete ease of reporting. If people are not reporting it themselves, there has to be a simple way of people reporting on others. If it's just a seminar or a class, it's not enough in any school, as well-meaning as it is.
200. I think there need to be full time counsellors at boarding schools. I did see the school counsellor in my fifth year at the school. He was a very nice man. It was a part-time thing. If you're locking people up away from home, there needs to be a very easy outlet if things are not going well.
201. I don't know if it still goes on, but the Combined Cadet Force was really bad for physical abuse. It was almost a licence for people to say, "I'm in the army now. I get to shout at you and kick you." It was mandatory. A lot of people felt very uncomfortable about doing military programmes. A lot of people loved shouting at people and ordering them around. I think the school got extra money for having a programme like that. Things like that should never be mandatory.

202. I don't think contact sports should ever be mandatory. I loved rugby, but it was an incredibly dangerous game with the imbalanced weights and sizes. Only now are they learning about the dangers from concussions and things like that. Everybody was forced to get out there and play rugby. A lot of people felt very uncomfortable and a lot of people would have felt terrified doing these activities.
203. There should always be locks on doors. When you're in your private room, you should have the right to lock your things up and feel secure. The housemaster would get very angry if people barricaded themselves behind their doors. The assumption was that boys did bad things behind doors.
204. In Canada, religion has been stripped out of education. Coming from the UK, we were indoctrinated at all levels. It was the culture in the UK. I don't know if there has been more separation of church and school now. I think there are still close links in private schools because of funding from church groups and charity status. I don't think it did us any good at all. I don't think it has any place in the modern world, being under this religious indoctrination. It had a lot of negative effects. We should have been using that precious time to do better things, like community projects or vocational learning.
205. I feel that there should have been a lot less prep time. Two hours, five days a week and going until 9:00 pm was really hard for people aged thirteen to eighteen after classes and sport all day. It put a lot of academic pressure on people.
206. Children should never be allowed to punish other children. If there's a problem, it should be reported to an adult and the adult should deal with it. There should never be any kind of written or verbal or physical punishment from children handed out to other children. They're in no moral or legal position to do that. In terms of staffing, there should have been a reduction in academic punishments. I think they need to come up with better policies about how children are treated. There need to be some sort of disincentives, but when you're handed down punishments all the time it can have the opposite effect as intended. It definitely had the opposite effect on me. The more I was handed down stupid punishments for talking, for not talking, the more it

had an almost self-harming effect. I don't know if it's the same for girls, but I think boys often respond a lot better to incentive.

207. There needs to be a greater separation between ages. Third years and fourth years should be completely separated from fifth year, lower sixth and upper sixth. Sixteen, seventeen and eighteen year olds shouldn't be mixing with thirteen year olds and should never be able to come into their bedrooms, work space or relaxation space.
208. Rather than traditional detention and horrible punishments, more educative ways of calming down would help. The people that were doing the abusing were in need too. Theirs were not rational responses. In a lot of ways it would have been a cry for help from them. They needed a lot of education about how to process their emotions and calm down. I believe that nowadays we know a lot more about those sorts of techniques. Emotional education is as important as academic, physical and vocational education – in schools and in teacher training.
209. I also think there needs to be protection for staff too and an understanding that this sort of thing happens to them as well.
210. 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.....

16 October 2020
Dated.....