

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MME

Support person present: No

1. My name is MME. My date of birth is 1957. I am 61 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My father was born and raised in Perth. My mother was from Chester and had moved to Perth during the war.
3. My father worked on the airlines and my parents lived in Lagos in Nigeria. My mother lost her first child at six months old through an adverse reaction to a vaccination for yellow fever, and my parents moved back to Scotland. My older sister, was born in Scotland and my parents then moved back to Lagos, where my mother became pregnant with me. She was suffering from dysentery during her pregnancy, so they decided to move back to Scotland for medical care. I was born in Perth, Scotland. We moved back to Nigeria after I was born.
4. was two years older than me, and I was the second eldest child. When we moved back to Nigeria, my parents had my younger sister, who was two years younger than me. We then moved to Bahrain in the Middle East, and my youngest sister, was born six years later.
5. We all went to school in Nigeria or Bahrain, wherever we were living at the time. I always knew I was going to be sent to Morrison's Academy boarding school in

Perthshire. My name had been put down for it from the day I was born. My sisters also went to boarding school. The three eldest children started in primary four. [REDACTED] started in primary five

6. My parents bought a home in Perth. We stayed there to prepare [REDACTED] to go to boarding school, as she was the first of us to go. Once she started, we went back to Bahrain. I was always backwards and forwards between Scotland and overseas.
7. I was eight years old when I went into boarding school, in 1965. I went to Morrison's Academy for boys and my sisters went to Morrison's Academy for girls. They were two completely separate buildings and had separate classes.

Morrison's Academy, Crieff, Perthshire

8. There were day pupils and boarders at the school and there were different expectations for them. I was there as a boarder pupil.

First few days

9. I was very excited about going to school. My father had told me it would be great fun and I would get to fly model aeroplanes with engines.
10. Twelve of us arrived and we were all in one room. I went to bed that night with eleven other eight year olds in the dormitory. We were woken at 7.30 am the following morning. We had to get dressed and be ready for the breakfast gong at 8 am.
11. We were all in the common room waiting for the gong to go. When the gong went, the twelve of us took off down the corridor. Before we got to the end, there was this god almighty bellow. It was one of the prefects. He was pulling us up for running in the corridors and we all got fifty lines as a punishment. I hadn't even been there 24 hours.

That was on Monday morning and the lines had to be ready for Wednesday or Thursday.

12. Those of us who didn't have the lines completed, were taken into the "black hole," which was a windowless room where the shoes were cleaned. We were made to line up, then come forward one at a time, made to bend over and beaten by the prefects. We got hit three or six times with a plimsoll gym shoe.
13. From that moment, up until I was about thirteen or fourteen, my buttocks were always bruised. There was never enough time for the bruising to clear before the next beating, except for the eight week summer holidays.

Boarding houses

14. There were four boarding houses for the boys when I first went in, but then one combined with the other to make three. I was in Glen Earn boarding house, and the other two were called Dalmore and Adelaide. The girls had their own separate boarding houses. They were all residential houses and were scattered around the village on residential streets.
15. There was also a matron in Glen Earn. Every boarding house would have had a matron.
16. My boarding house was made up of two large villas that were two storeys high. They were connected by a one storey corridor. There were about fifty boys spread between the two villas. They ranged from eight years old to eighteen. The junior boys were primary school kids, so aged eight to eleven year olds. The senior boys were secondary school age, so about twelve to eighteen. The junior boys were in one villa and the senior boys in the other.
17. There was a dining room. We had what we called the "prep room" just off from the corridor, which was where we would sit and do our homework in the evening. The sitting room was the common room for everybody from age eight right up to house

captain. The older fifth and sixth year boys also had their own separate common room, which was in the younger boys' house, so they had access to our house.

18. The younger boys had a "tutor" in their house. The tutor took on a mentoring role, but was also a professional teacher in the school. They were given accommodation and their quarters were in the house. My tutor was a gym teacher, but not the principal gym teacher. He left when I was thirteen or fourteen and was replaced by an oxford graduate English teacher.
19. The boarding house had a headmaster and his quarters were in the senior boys' house. The boarding house had three different headmasters in the time that I was there. Mr Patterson was the first, then it was Mr Findley. He didn't last long because the senior boys tormented his wife so much. Then it was Mr Turner, who was there for the duration of the time I was there. He was also an English Teacher in the school.
20. Each house had a house captain, who was a pupil, and he would have a team of about eight or nine prefects. They were charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline.
21. There were also school prefects, and they wore different ties. They had a prefects' room in the school. They had a school captain in charge of them. The school prefects could be boarders or day pupils.
22. This meant that the school prefects who were boarders, were dual prefects. You could tell who they were because they had a different tie.

Routine at Morrison's Academy

23. It was a very strict and brutal regime at the school. It was like a prison, closed setting where large numbers of people are forced to live. You very quickly found yourself in a slot in a pecking order, and that determined what your experience would be; whether

you would be praised, or teased and humiliated. This would be on an on-going basis from waking to sleeping, both in the boarding hostel and in the school.

Mornings and bedtime

24. We had to attend morning assembly every morning at 9 am before school. If you didn't attend, you got thrashed by the prefects. That was the bottom line. The only exception was if you were Catholic and there was only one Catholic in the school. The rest of us were protestant. There were no other religious groups in the school at that time.
25. We went to bed at a certain time and lights went out at a certain time. After lights went out, you would talk for fifteen minutes. If the prefects came into the room and you were talking, that was a punishable offence. You would be taken out of bed and literally be beaten.

School

26. The headmaster of the whole school was called the Rector. He had authority over the school.
27. The school building was about half a mile away from the boarding houses. The girls had their own school building. We had no combined classes with the girls. The only contact we had with the girls was when we passed each other on the way to school or on the way back to the boarding house. The boys and girls had the same uniform.
28. At least one of the primary school teachers in the boys' school was woman. I think the rest were all male.
29. The classes used to be arranged by having the cleverest people at the back and the dunces at the front.
30. I tried to be a good student from the age of ten or eleven until I was thirteen, and did all my homework. I engaged in all the sporting activities. I swam for Scottish schools.

I was a good long distance runner so I participated in the Scottish schools cross country running. I was also in the debating society.

31. There were things that a boarder couldn't do that day pupils could do.
32. There was a pecking order and you were in constant competition with your class mates. How you would fare on any particular day depended on your relationship with your peers.

Leisure time

33. We were allowed to go into town on a Saturday morning providing your rugby team wasn't playing that day. If you went into town, you could enjoy going to the shops and having a coffee or hamburger outside of the school routine. That was the only time I had the opportunity to spend some time with my sisters, but there was no time to develop any relationship with them.
34. On Saturday night we had what we called the "boarders' social," which would be a movie that anybody from first to sixth year could go to.
35. Every fortnight, there would be a disco on Saturday night for fourth to sixth year boys and girls until 10 pm.

Trips and visits

36. I never shared the same building or classes as my sisters. We would see each other as we passed each other on our way to school. You couldn't stop longer than a few minutes.
37. One time when I was home, my mum walked in when I was in the shower. She saw the bruising on my body from the small of my back to the tops of my thighs, and she freaked. I was about fifteen years old at the time. I was confused about why she was

getting so uptight and irate about it, when she had failed to do anything about it seven years ago.

38. My mum totally lost it and asked what had happened. I told her that she wouldn't do anything about it because I would be called in thrashed for it and it would be with fists.

Abuse at Morrison's Academy

39. The abuse started from the first week that I went in, when the prefect gave all the boys lines for running then hit us for not completing them. I don't think the school staff would even have known that we had been given lines. That happened when I was eight years old and it continued until I was thirteen or fourteen. There was a lot of disproportionate violence.
40. I was skinny and slight. I was called a "weed" and other disparaging names by other boys.
41. I wrote a letter to my parents a few weeks after being in the school requesting that I be moved to another boarding house. My father wrote back that I shouldn't write letters like that because it upset my mother. I was in shock by that response. From that point on, I felt abandoned, and that there was nobody out there who was on my side. If my parents, who I had never doubted until that moment, were not going to help me when I was being brutalised then who could I turn to. There was no one. I started to see my parents in the same light as I saw the prefects.
42. A lot of the earlier experiences as a child in single figures, were truly frightening. My belief was that I was going to lose my life. Life became very scary after that. I was in fear in all of my waking hours after that. That was pervasive; I don't think that was peculiar to me.

43. The house captain and prefects were given the authority by the institution through the headmaster. There were no guidelines and no boundaries. There was no requirement to document or report any punishment that had been meted out to any individual.
44. The house captain was supposed to monitor the severity and frequency of the punishment used by the prefects, but they were all post pubescent children in the early stages of emotional and intelligent development. They physically looked like adults but psychologically, they were kids. It was like the book Lord of the Flies.

Physical abuse

45. All sorts of weapons were used by the prefects to hit us. The slipper, plimsoll, swagger stick and occasionally the cane, were used. I recall a boy called [REDACTED] being hung on a coat hanger by his jacket by one of the senior boys, and then being beaten with a plimsoll until his buttocks bled, and.
46. People must have seen bruising during swimming and P.E. but nobody ever asked about it. I think they just presumed that we had done something to deserve it.
47. As boarders, we had to go and support the first fifteen rugby team, who were senior boys, if they were playing at home. We had to do this even if it was our one leisure morning when we were allowed to go into town. If we didn't go, we would be beaten.
48. On one occasion, the match finished late. We had to walk diagonally cross from one end of town to the other to get back to the boarding house. Lunch was at 1 pm on weekends and we were late for lunch. After lunch, we were punished for being late for lunch. We tried to put forward the argument that the game didn't finish until 12.45 and there was no way that we could have got back by 1.
49. All of us, from third year and below, were lined up to be punished by the prefects. We had to wait in a queue and it was better to be at the front of the queue than at the back because you had to have forty minutes of waiting and fear otherwise. On that occasion,

we were beaten with a swagger stick that had a metal tip, and it broke over a pupils' backside while he was beaten hit. We were hit with some force.

50. The players would have been deemed sportsman so they wouldn't have gotten beaten for being late.
51. I remember [REDACTED] who was a prefect. He was eighteen years old when I was about eight. He was a vicious, unpleasant character. He would never miss an opportunity to smack you, and would slap you as he walked past, for no reason. [REDACTED] hit me at least once a week. He hit other boys too.
52. He and his cronies would drag us out of bed, make us bend over, and give us six of the slipper on our backside, over our pyjamas. This would be for no reason at all.
53. If something happened that the house master wasn't pleased about, then there would be more formal punishments as well.
54. One time, someone had written something about one of the prefects on the bathroom wall in the boarding house. Nobody admitted doing it so every day, after tea, the junior boys had to queue up the stairs to the prefects' common room. We would then have to go on one by one and get the slipper. We got one slipper each the first night, two each the second night and so it increased every night. We would sometimes be hit with a plimsoll.
55. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who took the blame for it. He ran away about three times. Many children ran away, but they would get beaten by prefects when they got back. They would be brought back by the police, who were contacted by the school.
56. There was a fagging system in place where if you fagged for someone, you cleaned their shoe, made their beds and carrying their books. Some people you fagged for were very good to you and gave you fifty pence a week for your efforts. They also

acted as your protector. They would help to prevent unnecessary punishment towards you. Others were brutes and beat you no matter what you did for them.

57. I don't know how the staff in the boarding house couldn't have known about it. The tutor, who was the gym teacher in school, had a bedroom opposite our dormitory. There was no staff regularly visible in the boarding house so the prefects were free to do what they wanted.
58. The only adult visible was the matron, and we got through a few of them. The matron's job was to make sure you had clean clothes and to make up your tuck boxes. She would also mend clothes and look after you if you were sick. She also slept on the premises.
59. The matron would have been the most likely to see the abuse. Most of them were harsh, cold and caring. The ones who were kinder would leave quickly because they were horrified by what they saw. I don't recall any of them getting involved and stopping the abuse, but I think one of them did go to the headmaster. Nothing happened.
60. I suspected some sexual liaisons between some of the younger matrons and the older boys.
61. The senior boys even harassed Mr Findley's wife when Mr Findley was the house master. I think he was a chemistry teacher. The prefects were doing typical teenage boy stuff. They would make sexual innuendos and wolf whistle at her. She was so harassed that they didn't last long and he left the school after a year or two. Mr Findley wasn't severe enough in his punishment of the prefects to stop them doing it. They had no fear of the system.
62. From when I woke up, I tried to be invisible up until I went to bed. Going to bed didn't necessarily mean the end of the abuse, be it physical, sexual or emotional. I would think about how I had to go through it all again when I woke up. I was in a constant state of fear and hyper vigilance.

63. I met my first true love when I was in third year, aged about fourteen. That is when things started to change for me. All of a sudden I gained some status, and my own emerging rebellion made my tormentors more cautious. My abuse started to diminish and finish. It was a very significant relationship for me.
64. It was also at this point that I started experimenting with drugs whenever I could get them.

Abuse in school

65. When I was in primary seven, I got up early one morning, with the permission of the house master, to go swimming in the pool within the school. I was in the pool by 7 am so it meant I missed breakfast. I finished my training and rushed to get to assembly for 9 am but missed it by moments. The prefects were at the doors and didn't let me in because I was late.
66. I had to report to the prefects' room in the school building after assembly for missing it. I was then formally beaten. This meant bending over and getting six of the best on the backside. They would actually run at you so they could hit you harder.
67. [REDACTED] was one of the prefects in the school. He has a reputation for being overly violent. He would have been one of the ones involved with the swimming incident.
68. There was no justification for me getting thrashed for simply getting up early to train in order to bring honours to the school.
69. I didn't question the beating but I was crying because I was in pain. When I got to class, my form teacher asked me what was wrong. I said I missed assembly because I was training and had just been to the prefects' room.

70. My form teacher then took the matter to the staff room out of concern. He would have spoken to the rector about my distress upon entering the class, and also spoken to the Glen Earn house master, Mr Turner.
71. After tea that evening, one of my fellow pupils in primary five or six said I was wanted in the prefects' room. The house master had spoken to the dual prefect to question him about the necessity about my punishment, especially since I was training.
72. In the prefects' eyes, I was telling tales, so I got thrashed again for that. You were damned if you did and damned if you didn't. You got beaten for telling the truth because they said you were telling tales, and also for withholding information because they saw it as lying.
73. If I had tried to turn to someone of authority, such as a master in the school, then you weren't doing yourself any favours. They would tell the prefects that a particular person had complained, so there was a risk in telling anybody. I then internalised it and lived with that through the boarding school experience.
74. I didn't understand what I had done wrong to incur this wrath. I was not able to identify anything concrete, so I started to think there was something inherently wrong with me as an individual that other people could see. I thought I must be radiating some sort of bad aura.
75. When I was eight to nine years old, I was a boarder, and I was a day pupil when I was aged nine to ten years old. I was staying in the family home in Perth, and was commuting to school by bus every day.
76. When I became a day pupil, I was then a target for even my own peers, because I was no longer one of them. I went back to being a boarder after that.
77. I remember the senior boys made the boys from my form class, including myself, prance around the common room while they threw darts at us. These were darts from a dart board. All sorts of weapons were used.

78. Some prefects were better than others. There were the sadists, who enjoyed meting out pain. There were some that were much more sympathetic and much more human, but they were very much in the minority. The bulk of them adhered to the notion that corporal punishment was ok. There were beliefs that legitimised the violence; that they would make men out of us.
79. I don't think the teaching staff knew how brutal the prefects were with their punishment of the boys. They never hit us in front of the staff. There was no requirement to document or report any punishment that had been meted out to any individual. The headmasters didn't want to hear complaints from parents or other colleagues. They didn't want to deal with freaked out kids.
80. The [REDACTED] teacher, Mr [REDACTED] CDU used to grab people by the hair and shook them violently. He used to do it to one boy all the time. When I was a bit older, he accused me of talking and came towards me to grab my hair. I was shocked because we had always got on ok. I jumped out of my seat and told him he wasn't doing that to me. He came after me and I ran, so the teacher left to tell the headmaster.
81. On another occasion, when I was older, I refused to accept punishment for something because I hadn't done what I was being accused of. I turned my back on the teacher in class, who was the [REDACTED] teacher and also the [REDACTED]. This resulted in him hitting me on the back. I ran around the class, and he chased me. He then ran out to tell the headmaster.
82. As I got older, I started to deal with the abuse by going ballistic. I would then be hauled up in front of the head master. At this point you would be sat down, and spoken to. It was explained that I couldn't behave like this. They seemed to deal with this reactionary behaviour a bit more sensitively.
83. When the prefects got to know about you going ballistic, they would hand out physical punishment for it. I couldn't stand up to a group of prefects. Then I would cry and be

told not to be a wimp and be verbally abused for that. I was called a wimp and called a [REDACTED] because I was skinny.

Peer sexual abuse

84. I was unfortunate to re-join the same class in primary five as a day pupil that I had attended in primary four as a boarder. I was now catching a bus for an hour to and from school with other boys and girls who were doing the same. My fellow classmates who were boarding built up a resentment against me. I was no longer one of them.
85. In the year that I was a day pupil, a few new students had joined. I didn't have much to do with them in school, but I did when I went back as a boarder.
86. There had been a group of twelve boarders when I had left the boarding house in primary four. A few new boys had joined in the year I had been away. One of them was a boy called [REDACTED] who was a couple of years older than the rest of us because he was academically dull. I was ten years old and he was about twelve or thirteen years old. His parents were from [REDACTED] and he claimed to speak fluent [REDACTED]
87. [REDACTED] was a bully. He was manipulative and assumed control of the rest of us boys by way of threat, violence and coercing others to isolate you. He was like the leader. Every opportunity was taken to humiliate and beat you. I now had to contend with this boy's regime, as well as the school system. He also slept in the same dormitory as the rest of us.
88. He abused me regularly over a four year period when I was ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen years old. It happened once or twice a week.
89. It would start when we were all in bed at night . [REDACTED] would tell me to go to his bed and tell me to tickle his back. Others would have heard him say that. Then he would make me touch his genitals. He would climax and then I would be allowed to go off to bed.

90. On one or two occasions, I heard him asking someone else to tickle his back when he was in bed. I don't know if it resulted in anything sexual.
91. When there were occasions that me and him were alone, he would come on to me. That could be during the day, or in the shower room or the bathrooms, which had locks on. We also had to go for Sunday walks as a group through the forest. We would have an hour to mess around, and he would find ways to separate me from the crowd. We would go away to an enclosed area and he would abuse me there.
92. Over the years, he got verbal and just told me what he wanted me to do to him. By that time I also knew what it was that he wanted. This was not something I wanted to participate in.
93. There were times when I put my foot down and refused the abuse. I would then be faced with constant viral and physical harassment by him and the rest of my peers. [REDACTED] would make the rest of the boys in the dormitory turn against me and physically fight me, one at a time. Everybody did what he said because he was much bigger than the rest of us. I would be isolated.
94. [REDACTED] had his buddies who were bullies in their own right, and they would give me a hard time too. They would take sweets and cigarettes off me, and give me verbal abuse. They were called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
95. The other boys in the dormitory who I can remember were [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
96. There was an occasion when we were in the prep room with lots of other boys. I was sitting on the desk and [REDACTED] was sitting on the chair, and [REDACTED] started rubbing his leg up against mine. It was very obvious. I never understood how other people didn't notice.

97. I knew what was going on was wrong and didn't want anybody to know. [REDACTED] definitely knew what he was doing wrong. He was older and secretive, and wouldn't say or do anything in front of other boys. The nightmare that everybody fears in boarding school is being labelled a 'poof.' That never happened to me. I don't know if it is because people genuinely didn't know, or if they were scared of [REDACTED]
98. I think [REDACTED] preyed on another boy called [REDACTED] after me. I noticed the bathroom door was locked and heard people in it. I thought it resembled what had happened to me. My suspicion was that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in there. I also noticed the same pattern of behaviour towards [REDACTED] that I had suffered. He too was subjected to this ritualistic beatings. I remember [REDACTED] even ordered me to fight [REDACTED] I didn't want to do it but I felt like we had no choice. [REDACTED] had a terrible time in his latter years. He was really tormented by [REDACTED]
99. [REDACTED] left at the end of fifth year and I went back for part of sixth year. He returned to the boarding house when I was in sixth year, with three or four others who had left the year before.
100. It wasn't uncommon for people who had left to come back and stay the night. All through my time there, I remember boys who had left being invited to comeback and stay overnight. These could be much older boys who had been before my time. They slept in the boarding house but I don't know where. I think maybe in the sick bay, which had four beds in it.
101. The majority of the guys who came back were nice guys. When [REDACTED] came back to stay the night, I loathed seeing him. I was the [REDACTED] and had my own room. Things were different then and I was in charge.

Leaving Morrison's Academy

102. I was boarding from eight years old until I was seventeen years old, except for primary five when I was a day pupil.

103. I was the [REDACTED] in sixth year. I had got my place in Glasgow University. When I went back to school in sixth year and had no interest in being in the school. I was rebelling.
104. Corporal punishment was not allowed by this stage. There were other inducements to keep the boys in line. We were allowed to smoke in the stone shower rooms and were told that would be taken away as a privilege if we didn't keep the others in line. That was the incentive to keep the others in line. Some of the prefects still used corporal punishment because the pupils were a law unto themselves, and because of their own experiences as children.
105. As [REDACTED], I was the one who had to tell my peers, we were prefects, what was admissible with regards to punishment for bad behaviour. I felt it was my responsibility to restrain the less disciplined of prefects from engaging in violence. I gave lines first, and then essays. I would give lines for things like not making your bed, having a messy locker or not doing your household duties. It was very army like and things had to be spick and span.
106. I left in the January of sixth year, when I was seventeen years old. I left with two Bs and three Cs in my Highers.

Reporting of abuse at Morrison's Academy

107. My parents thought it was very important for me to get an education at Morrison's. They wanted me to get an education that they never had. That was the dream they had for their children and I didn't want to shatter that dream. I wrote to my parents two or three weeks after starting school. I acknowledged how important it was for them that I stay there, but I requested that I be moved to another boarding house because of what I was suffering at that boarding house.

108. The mail I got from my parents would be those blue sealed air mail letters that folded up. When I got a letter back, my mother would write on the main part, and my father would write on the folded up part. He would be the one to mail the letter back.
109. When I received a letter back, my mother had written on the main part and my father had written on the flap at the back. He wrote and told me not to write letters like that again because it upset my mother.
110. My father has been dead since 2004. My mother told me about ten years after he died, when she was 85 years old that she never saw the letter I wrote. She believes that my father destroyed my letter so as not to upset her.
111. The only time I told an adult at Morrison's about being beaten was when my form teacher asked why I was crying. I told him it was because I had been beaten by the prefects. He did try to sort it out, but it just resulted in me being beaten by the prefects again for telling.
112. I knew there was nobody I could tell about the sexual abuse. I never told anybody about the sexual abuse, for fear of being labelled a "poof".

Life after being in care

113. I met [REDACTED] in the student union in Edinburgh University amidst a crowd of people. I have discovered that [REDACTED] worked for Scandinavian Airlines, SAS. I presume as a cabin attendant because he wouldn't have been a pilot.
114. After boarding school, I was accepted into Glasgow University to do psychology. I started it and hated it. I was away from the confines of the brutal regime and started to dabble in drugs. My focus was more in getting stoned and going to music concerts rather than go to lectures. I tried to get out of university on the basis of ill health so I could go travelling to India.

115. I was sent to student health and was put on anti-depressants by a psychiatrist when I was eighteen years old. I didn't take them for very long because I didn't get a buzz from them. I was then sent to the student Counsellor who used a paradoxal intervention on me. He said that he didn't think I was university material and should be in a Polytechnic, which annoyed me so I stayed in university to prove a point.
116. I realised that I was better getting out with a degree than dropping out, so I got my degree. I found it very difficult to garner enough interest to concentrate on work. This was because I had a new found freedom and was taking acid and speed and smoking dope, day in and day out.
117. I only passed one exam in my first year of university. I repeated first year and after four years at university I came out with only an ordinary degree. I could only concentrate on doing enough to scrape through.
118. As soon as I got my degree, I left and went to Amsterdam with my girlfriend who I had been with for three years. I lived in Amsterdam for three years. I mainly took drugs and worked in factories.
119. I split up with my girlfriend. I continued to try and stay in Amsterdam and was trying to live outside the system but realised I wasn't able to. I was aspiring to be a hippie but I was a decade too late for that lifestyle.
120. I came back to Scotland. This was during the mining strikes and unemployment was high. I was living in the family home in Perth and my parents were abroad. I worked as a nursing assistant in a psychiatric hospital in Perth during the summer holidays. I then trained as a psychiatric nurse. I was in another relationship with someone for about four years.
121. I broke up with my girlfriend and met my wife when I was about 25 years old who was also doing the same training. She had a young son who had been prematurely born in November, and I met her in March when the baby was very young. I fell in love with this kid. We got married and I adopted the child when he was about two years old.

122. I did psychiatric nursing from 1982 to 1985. I applied to do social work in Edinburgh and was offered a place but I couldn't get a grant because I didn't have experience in social care. I instead decided to do a general nursing course in London so the three of us moved there.
123. I then got a call saying I was being offered a grant in Edinburgh, so we moved back and I started my social work course in 1986.
124. The first job I got was in Southern Ireland, and it made sense to move because my wife was Irish. I moved in 1988, after being offered a one year temporary contract as a psychiatric social worker, and then I was made permanent the following year. I then held that post for twelve years.
125. I went on to do a family therapy training course at a child guidance clinic in Dublin between 1991 and 1993. I had a full time job, a young son and a new born daughter. I felt under a lot of pressure and my relationship with my wife wasn't good. I was still using drugs throughout this whole time.
126. I worked in an organisation in Ireland from 2000 until 2010, which was set up specifically in the wake of the child abuse scandals in Ireland.
127. My wife was very outgoing and sociable. She liked to drink and I was never good at drinking. Difficulties arose in our relationship with her going out all the time, and we split up in 2006.
128. I got into another relationship for a couple years. When that ended, I began to isolate myself and was spending a lot of time alone. I have been alone the last ten years and have been reflecting. I have wondered whether I want to go on.

Impact

129. The effect of institutional schooling has had a huge impact on my life. A lot of my troubled life has been a result of my boarding school experiences.
130. I had no relationship with my parents because we had no daily contact when I was in school. Family for me finished when I was eight years old. The letter from my parents, in which my father had written that I shouldn't upset my mother by writing things about the boarding house, affected my relationship with them. I never approached them again for anything.
131. I told my parents that boarding school was no more than the middle class answer to abortion. I deeply resented their failure to save me.
132. I wanted to do medicine and I would have been well able to, had I not focused more in getting away from the horrendous reality that I had experienced and was trapped in. I got away from that reality by taking drugs and made friends who did the same.
133. I found smoking cannabis was initially helpful because it made people weary of me so they would give me a wide berth and left me alone. It meant I was isolated but at least it meant I wasn't being abused so that was fine with me. Getting stoned also emotionally numbed me.
134. Smoking cannabis was first helpful, then I considered it hip in my 20s during my university years. In my 30s, when I had a job and a baby, it was a habit. In my 40s it was hell and in my 50s it was horrific.
135. I have battled with addiction to substances my whole life. I use it as a way of escaping my emotional self. I was even using cannabis when my children were young and so I now suffer a lot of guilt about that. They don't see it that way, but my relationship with my son is not great. He is a police officer and has had some conflicts due to my drug use.

136. I was in a constant state of fear and hyper vigilance at Morrison's Academy. I believe that resulted in an adult lifelong experience of depression, high anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. I have had treatment for this. I did not get treatment soon after leaving school and so my symptoms are so embedded that all that can be done is for them to be treated.
137. I find it difficult to trust people. My experience as a therapist working with people who were abused in institutional settings, has taught me that trust is something survivors have real difficulty with.
138. I have always suffered excruciating and debilitating anxiety which has stopped me reaching my potential. I wasn't able to form relationships. The women I met had to form relationships with me. They would last a few years, and then break up. I couldn't maintain a relationship.
139. I worked in the medical profession in various capacities as an adult. Hospitals have a very rigid and authoritative hierarchy. Having come from a boarding school regime, where you ended up with a bloody nose if you couldn't stand up to your peers, I struggled to deal with this type of authority.
140. There were many times I was in meetings with consultants where I would intensely experience discomfort that was wholly associated with being in this authoritative setting where the consultants were the boss. I had to challenge the consultants when I didn't agree with them in order for the patient to get the best treatment. This meant I had to challenge my professional colleagues, and all of my childhood emotions would come rushing back.
141. I have always felt less than other people and have had low self-esteem. If you are continually put down as a youngster, it does have an effect on your adult life. Those pre-pubescent years are when the foundations of your sense of self are laid down. I was always made fun of for being too skinny and called names at boarding school. If you hear it often enough, you take it on board. I started to think that about myself and so have always had body image issues.

142. You learn to develop masks as an adult for certain situations. I managed to learn to put up a front in life to show that I am reasonably comfortable and confident, but inside I am churning and scared
143. For a long time, I tried to block out what happened to me. I found out from doing my own work, that if you are being sexually abused, you can't help but get aroused whether you want to participate in the act or not. As horrific as this is, it was comforting for me to learn that my getting aroused during my abuse was not my fault.
144. My biggest fear is that I feel responsible for what happened to me. I feel like I invited it upon myself. There must have been something about me that made people treat me the way they did, and made my sexual abuser hone in on me. Even though my own training in psychotherapy and cognitive behaviour therapy teaches me otherwise, they have become my core beliefs.
145. Even now, when I reflect on my life, I feel a sense of worthlessness and pointlessness. I don't know what I am but a waste of space.

Treatment and support

146. I was diagnosed with depression when I was at university, but I was putting it on at that time. I then started to really feel depressed when I came back from Amsterdam. I have suffered with depression my whole life and have taken been on anti-depressants since the mid-1990s to the present day.
147. I always knew I had anxiety and was given Prozac for a while. I was then found to have Hepatitis C so had to come off the Prozac because of the impact on the liver. I was then put on Paroxetine, which compressed my normal emotional spectrum whilst trying to dull my anxiety. That was horrendous to come off.

148. During the time I was working, my issues began being triggered. I became unfit to work and had to go to my boss and say I was a drug addict. I was referred to occupational therapy. I also went to Narcotics Anonymous on the back of that.
149. I received psychotherapy treatment three times a month. It was humanistic therapy, which takes a holistic view of the person. It looks at your relationships and interactions with other people, instead of just deciding the person seeing the therapy is broken.
150. I went into treatment for substance abuse in 2006, after I started using cocaine again in 2004.
151. I was being prescribed benzodiazepines for anxiety, which I have suffered from my whole life. I became addicted to them in 2010 and managed to wean myself off them over a two week period. It was absolute hell, so when I became addicted to them again in 2012, signed myself into a psychiatric hospital in Dublin. I wanted medically supervised withdrawal.
152. I was in for six weeks and the psychiatrist said I was suffering from an anxiety disorder, and not depression. It was recognised that I am suffering from PTSD and that is as a direct result of the abuse I suffered in boarding school.
153. I am not in a great place just now. I am now taking Lustral tablets for anxiety and depression. I am also on two types of strong and addictive opiate painkillers for arthritis and joint pains associated with Hepatitis C and osteoporosis. I have a prescription of Valium which I occasionally take it. I also take Temazepam to help me sleep because of nightmares.

Police reporting

154. I never reported any abuse to the police. Even after I divulged my abuse during my therapy. I was a drug user so the last thing I wanted was the police at my door.

155. I also have a fear that my abuse was my own fault and that I invited it upon myself.

Other information

156. I know from speaking to other boarding schools that things have now changed for the better. I still don't think children should be institutionalised unless absolutely necessary. Children in boarding schools don't have connections to their families and have no sense of themselves in a big institutions. I would like to see boarding schools abolished.
157. I don't think single sex schools are healthy. You end up having a distorted view of life, love and work after being institutionalised. Then when you come out, you find it hard to relate to people who have a more balanced view of life. Society is made up of both genders so should all other aspects of life, including school.
158. 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 MME

Dated Thurs 7th Feb/19