

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KQU

Support person present: No

1. My name is KQU. That was the name that I was known as when I went to boarding school. I was adopted at the age of two. KQU is the surname of my adoptive parents. I don't know if I was known by another name before I was adopted. My date of birth is 1978. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going to Boarding School

2. I was born in the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow. I don't have any memories of the first two years, before I was adopted. My birth mother is dead now. She died from cancer. My adoptive parents are and I also have an adopted sister, who is four years younger than me.
3. I grew up with my parents and sister at Pollokshields. My dad was always working in London. My mum also worked. She was something to do with public health in Scotland. I went to Nithsdale Road Nursery and Glasgow Academy for primary school. Educationally, I think I was getting on fine at the Academy. I had friends there, but I just didn't like it. I started acting out a bit, but now I have my own child and I look back on it, the things I was doing were perfectly normal behaviour. My parents took me to see a psychologist and there was a report prepared. Apparently, I needed more father figures in my life because my dad was always in London. That's the reason my mum keeps using for sending me to Keil. I think my father knew SNR at that time, CGC.

Entrance exam / travelling to Keil School for the first time

4. I vaguely remember going to an open day at Keil, but I didn't think much of it at the time. We didn't really talk about it. I was brought up in a 'children should be seen and not heard' way. After the open day, I remember being at Keil for an exam. I assume it was an entrance exam. I was also shown around the school by someone, [REDACTED] might have been his name.
5. I have no recollection of preparing to go to the school, like getting my uniform or books. I also have no memory of my first day, probably because it was a good day. Most of what I remember are the bad things that happened to me while I was there.

Keil School, Dumbarton

6. I remember the school motto at Keil was 'Persevere in Hope.' Looking back on it now, it's a bit ironic really. The school was in Dumbarton and sat in fairly large grounds. It was a co-education school with mainly boarders, but also some day pupils. [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] when I was there, was initially CGC [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] was Mr [REDACTED] whose nickname was [REDACTED] because we thought he behaved like a Nazi. His nickname was already established by the time I went to the school. He was strict, but tended to pick on certain people, including myself. He took great pleasure in seeing me leave the school when I was eventually asked to, to the point that he smiled and waved. He was a bit sadistic in that way.

Divisions and houses

7. Within the grounds of Keil, there was the main building and three boys' boarding houses: Mason, Isle of Kerr and MacKinnon. The girls' house was in the main building and consisted of about thirty girls.

8. The first house I was in was Mason House. It was for boys aged eleven to twelve. There were two dormitories. The first years were on the first floor and the second years were on the second floor. There were approximately eighteen boys in each. Mr **OCQ** was the housemaster and he lived in his own accommodation in the house with his wife, I think. On the ground floor, there was Mr **OCQ** accommodation, a TV room, shower room and first years' dorm. On the second floor, there was the second years' dorm, shower room and a prefects' room.
9. Isle of Kerr House and MacKinnon House were both senior houses for third to sixth year boys aged twelve to leaving age, so seventeen or eighteen years old. I can't remember the exact numbers, but both houses had a lot more boys than Mason House. Each of the senior houses had two housemasters, because they were bigger. One would be on the first floor and one on the second floor.
10. After Mason House, I went to Isle of Kerr House. The housemaster was Mr Smith, and the deputy housemaster was **IPT**. Mr Smith lived on the first floor with his wife and two boys, I think. **IPT** had a flat on the second floor. In MacKinnon House, the housemasters were Mr **OPR** and **KPC**. Mr **OZC** was also a housemaster in MacKinnon while I was there too.
11. The main house consisted of the dining room, matron's office and sick bay, the girls' dormitory, the girl's housemistress' room and classrooms for English, history and geography. Other lessons, like craft and design, were taught in portacabins on the school grounds. There were also two solid standalone buildings for biology and chemistry.

Routine at Keil School

Daily routine

12. In the morning, we were woken up by the chiefs, which is what we called prefects, at around 6:00 a.m. or 7:00 a.m. They would come in and put the lights on, shout at us

and pull our duvets off. If we were being punished for something, we would be woken before 6:00 a.m. and made to run up a hill. We had chores to do before we went to lessons. One day you would be on bins, the next, you could be hoovering the dorm or cleaning the showers or toilets. After chores, we would get washed and go to the main house for breakfast at around 8:00 a.m. After breakfast, we would make our way to lessons while the younger pupils tended to clean up. There was a certain hierarchy followed when it came to duties.

13. In the winter, we had lessons in the morning, games after lunch, because of the dark nights, and then more lessons after games. In the summer, we had lessons before and after lunch and games after the school day had finished, because it was lighter for longer. After dinner, we had about half an hour to ourselves and then we would do homework in our dorm for around two hours. Bedtime was between 8:30 pm and 10:00 p.m. depending on your age.
14. At the weekend, we had rugby on a Saturday morning and the afternoon was free time. We would play table tennis or pool in the dorm. I often had detention during that time for being rude or being caught smoking, which a lot of us did, even though we were not allowed. On a Saturday evening, we would either be in the dorm, or we would go to the sport's pitches. On a Sunday, we went to church or hill waking and then, the rest of the day was free time.

Mealtimes / food

15. The boarders ate all their meals together in the dining room in the main building. During meals, the seniors in each house would be at the top of the table and the youngest kids at the bottom. The food was served to the seniors first so sometimes, there was very little left for the younger kids. The food was terrible, but we just ate what we were given. You ate because you were lucky if you ate. The housemasters sat at the top table. I don't think they ate the same food as us. I think they had their own menus.

Washing / bathing

16. There were shower rooms on ground floor of the boarding houses. It was one shower room for the whole house. They were all communal showers, so there wasn't really any privacy. They weren't modern showers, but we had hot water and our own toiletries. Staff weren't really involved in supervising showers, so it could have quite easily lent itself to bullying, but I didn't experience that. We would usually shower in the morning and after rugby.

Clothing / uniform

17. The uniform at Keil was just trousers and a green jumper with some yellow on it. When we went to church, we wore a kilt and blazer.

Pocket money / Personal possessions

18. We did get pocket money sent to us by our parents. I think I got a pound each week. My pocket money was really stingy from my parents. Some kids got quite good pocket money. There was a tuck shop in the school, but it was extortionate, so I couldn't really buy anything. You also had to be careful with what you had at Keil.
19. You could have personal possessions at school, but it wasn't advisable. I had my grandfather's violin from the war. I came back after a weekend, and someone had smashed it up. I also had a stuffed Roland Rat toy. One of the seniors ejaculated over that. I remember there was a boy called [REDACTED]. He would bring a tuck box back after each weekend. It would be full to the brim, and everyone just stole the lot off him.

Schooling

20. I don't really know what I think of the education at Keil. I wasn't really aware of how I was doing at school, and didn't care, to be honest. I assume all the teachers were qualified. The housemasters also taught at the school. Mr White was history, [REDACTED] OCQ

was [REDACTED], OZC [REDACTED] and KPC [REDACTED] were [REDACTED] and IPT [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]. The teachers seemed to have general control over the class, to a certain extent.

Religious instruction

21. Religion didn't play a big part in schooling at Keil. On a Sunday morning, the Catholic pupils went to the monastery, which was just beside Isle of Kerr House. The Protestant pupils went to the church in town, which was a twenty-minute walk away. I don't remember any prayers before meals or bed. It really wasn't a particularly religious place. As an example, there was a guy called [REDACTED]. I think that was his name. He was Muslim I believe and as part of his religion, he couldn't be seen naked. The seniors dragged him out and paraded him around naked in the dormitory. He didn't last long at the school and left shortly after that happened. I don't remember those responsible being punished at all.

Sport and athletics

22. As far as I remember, we had games every weekday and rugby on a Saturday morning. I was in the first fifteen for rugby. It wasn't like the American system where, if you do well at sports, you do well at school, type of thing. I suppose, in a way, the first fifteen were treated a little better.
23. Although I was first fifteen, I wasn't really with that crowd. They had a bit of an air of superiority around them, or they thought they did. It tended to be the people who were good at sports who became chiefs. I think all the first fifteen went on to become prefects, but I was out of the school by then.

Birthdays

24. Birthdays at school weren't pleasant, but I was lucky enough to have my birthday in the Easter holidays. If you were at school on your birthday, you got rushed by an entire gym full after morning assembly. All the kids would pile on top of you punching and kicking. Surprisingly in these situations, the person getting jumped was usually ok at

the bottom of the pile. It was the kids in between the bottom and the top that got it worst. Even though I wasn't at school on my birthday, it happened to me once when my friend said it was my birthday when it wasn't.

Home leave / communication with parents

25. We didn't get home leave often, only twice per term and school holidays. It was something I looked forward to, but it was going back to school afterwards that was the problem. Parents were kept up to date with progress by report cards being sent home. I don't remember parents or families ever really visiting the school, other than the occasional parent's evening.
26. I think my mum and dad, and possibly my sister because she didn't go to boarding school, came and took me out to Helensburgh once. I'm sure that was just after my gran died. There really wasn't a lot of communication between parents and kids at the school. I maybe wrote letters home at the start, but after a while, I didn't bother. I don't think there was much in the way of communication between the school and parents either.

Pastoral care

27. There wasn't anyone at the school that you could talk to, and the boys didn't really talk to each other about what was going on. Most people saw what was happening. I suppose pastoral care was part of the housemaster's job, as well as teaching, but it didn't happen. No one would speak to the housemaster because it would just get back to the seniors somehow and make matters worse.

Healthcare

28. There was a matron at Keil, but I can't remember her name. I have no idea what her qualifications were, but she was nice. If you were unwell, you would go to the sick bay, and she would usually just tell you to put a Tubigrip on everything. I was at the sick bay quite a lot. I faked sickness often because of what was happening to me on a daily basis. She had a terrible habit of giving you a thermometer while she saw someone

else. I used to put the thermometer against the radiator and that was it, straight into sick bay. There were beds in there, you got left alone, and you got orange juice. I thought it was quite clever at the time.

Running away

29. I tried to run away from Keil once, but it didn't work out. The escape mission failed. I got to the train station and Mr Smith turned up with [REDACTED] who was the fastest boy at school. There was no outrunning him, so I went back with them. I think I got detention for that.

Bed-wetting

30. I wet the bed when I first went to Keil. That would have been in Mason House. I got bullied and called names for it. It was one of these things that just got out and you would be annihilated verbally. It wasn't something that was ever really dealt with by the school. If I wet the bed, I'd put the sheets in the laundry myself. The chiefs would sometimes find out because, if you didn't get up when they shouted at you, they would pull the blanket off you and could see that the bed was wet. There were others who wet the bed too. It happens. It eventually came to an end naturally for me.

Discipline

31. The class teachers were the ones who would discipline the kids. You didn't really see the headmaster. He was a last resort for suspensions or expulsion. Discipline from the teachers was mainly detention, lines or what they called 'Natural History'. If you got lines, you would be given the House Rules Booklet to copy out. 'Natural History' was basically just hard labour and involved things like painting rocks.
32. I was hit by a teacher once. I was on the rugby field and I smiled at Mr ^{KPS} [REDACTED] who was a [REDACTED] teacher. He asked me to see him afterwards, outside the master's common room, and he hit me. I was quite taken aback by it. Mr ^{KPS} [REDACTED] was a bit of psycho

and I'm sure he had a mental breakdown just before that happened. I heard things about him losing his temper at other boys, but nothing I witnessed myself. Other than that, physical punishment didn't really come from the teachers. There wasn't any sanctioned corporal punishment when I was there. The physical abuse mainly came from the chiefs and seniors.

Abuse at Keil School – Prefect bullying

33. Bullying was a daily problem at Keil. It wasn't something that just happened to me, it happened to most kids. It was a really bad system, giving power to a bunch of sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to look after a bunch of eleven or twelve-year-olds. I'm not sure if the chiefs could give detention or written punishments. It was more physical and emotional abuse, which they called punishments.
34. One of the punishments was to stand, with your arms out to the side with books placed on your hands. If you lowered your arms, you were hit with a broom handle or put in a bin and thrown around. Other punishments included being made to stand outside, next to the 'midgie' bush, in nothing but your boxers or being made to hold your hand over the spout of a boiling kettle.
35. If you didn't do what the chiefs told you, you got the shit kicked out of you. The beatings involved being punched and kicked. Someone was always on the receiving end of it. On one occasion, I got my lip split open by a prefect throwing a bin at me. I had to be taken to hospital, by the matron, I think. On another occasion, one of the senior boys asked me to do something and I said no. He pinned me down and slapped his genitals in my face. It got around that I'd given him a blow job, so I was given the nickname KQU
36. I can't speak for the teachers and housemasters, but I think they probably did know about the bullying that went on. It certainly wasn't hidden.

Abuse at Keil School – IPT

37. IPT was a teacher and deputy housemaster in Isle of Kerr House. I think he would have been in his forties when I was at the school. He sexually abused me while I was at Keil. The first occasion was in the when I was eleven years old. There were two connected by a storage room. He touched me in the storage room, made me put my hand on his genitals and he masturbated me. It was scary and I was frozen in fear. After that, it happened almost daily, either in the his flat, or out hillwalking. At first, he would say 'it was our little secret,' or words to that effect.
38. He always seemed very nice, kind even. He made you feel wanted in a way. He gave me things, like money and he bought me a set of weights. I told another pupil about the weights, and he thought I should feel uncomfortable about it because people might assume something. I told Mr OCQ, my housemaster at the time, about the weights, but nothing happened. I'm not clear whether I mentioned the abuse or just the weights. I did feel uncomfortable about it so I gave the weights back to IPT.
39. The sexual abuse was constant from 1989 until I was around fourteen years old. That's when it started to taper off. It was like he lost interest in a way. It still happened, but not as often. It went from almost daily to every one or two weeks. It was the same kind of thing but had progressed to him making me masturbate him and him ejaculating on me. He did try to anally penetrate me, but he didn't manage.
40. I had suspicions about him abusing other boys but didn't witness anything. I would go to his flat because I was so programmed. Sometimes, when I was in his flat, other boys would knock on his door, like I knocked on his door. I knew what he was doing was wrong, but I didn't feel there was anyone around who I could speak to about it. I also didn't want it getting back to the seniors, like things seemed to do. I was already getting bullied constantly, so I didn't want to give them any more ammunition. Instead, I'd act up because I wanted to get myself out of that school. I did my best to get kicked out.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Keil School

41. You just didn't tell in those days. When I had my lip split open, I think I just said I fell over or something. I did try to speak to my parents about being unhappy at Keil, but their attitude was 'tough it out.' I didn't tell anyone about being sexually abused.

Leaving Keil School

42. I was suspended three times from Keil between the age of fourteen and sixteen, usually for a week or two at a time. The first was for buying alcohol, but it wasn't for me. I was asked to buy it for the seniors. The second suspension was for going AWOL. The third was for pushing a wheelie bin down a road, but it wasn't actually me. Then, when I was sixteen, I was caught by Mr White drinking in the dorm with others. I was politely asked to leave the school for good by Mr Cummings. I packed up and got picked up by my dad's secretary. My parents didn't take it too well.

Life after being at Keil School

43. After Keil, I didn't go to university. I did some courses, but nothing worth talking about. I moved around a lot as an adult, and I've had a lot of different jobs. I worked it out and I think I've lived in twenty-three different places.

Impact, Treatment and support

44. At seventeen, I started getting bad headaches and that's when the panic attacks hit. They got worse when I was eighteen. I think it was to do with fear of being stuck in a situation I couldn't get out of.

45. I was drinking heavily and taking drugs for a period. I was diagnosed with Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, anxiety and depression. I also suffered with agoraphobia for around six or seven months. I've been on all sorts of medications for these conditions over the years, but my mental health is much better now. I've had a lot counselling and therapy on and off throughout my adult life.
46. I don't have great trust in people and find it difficult to maintain intimate relationships. I tend to push people away and have feelings of worthlessness. I think eleven to sixteen years old is a key age where trust develops, and I didn't get that. The whole school experience affected my mental and physical health greatly. I've had periods where I've attempted suicide, but I have my daughter now. Without her, I probably wouldn't be here.

Reporting of abuse after leaving Keil School

47. In 2014 or 2015, I was 'googling' and came across information that IPT [REDACTED] was teaching at [REDACTED] and he was still taking people hill walking. He used to say to me "Come hillwalking, it'll get you out of church," but he knew exactly what he was doing. He just didn't think he'd get caught.
48. I contacted the police when I realised he was still teaching. I was living just outside of London at the time. I gave a statement in Kent which was passed on to Police Scotland. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
49. I told my parents about the abuse at the same time I contacted the police. Their reaction was as expected to be honest. My mum said something like "Best let sleeping dogs lie." She does feel guilty about it, but she says she sent me to Keil on the recommendation of the psychologist.

Records

50. I'm not bothered about my records.

Lessons to be Learned

51. Schools shouldn't be allowed to let senior pupils control younger pupils. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that it just leads to relentless bullying. As for the abuse, I learned [REDACTED] IPT [REDACTED] the school had received complaints about him from the parents of other boys. By his own admission, he kept on doing it because the school didn't do anything about it.
52. I'm not sure you can really stop people like that. He was clever in the way he went about it. It would have been useful to have had someone to speak to, someone impartial and not connected to the school. That would have offered some kind of safety net.
53. I'm not sure if teachers had access to the records of students when I was at school, or if they do now. If that is the case, I think certain teachers could use that information to potentially groom students. I often wonder if [REDACTED] IPT [REDACTED] knew about my background and if that is the reason he targeted me.

Hopes for the Inquiry

54. I was encouraged to contact the Inquiry by my godmother. I wanted to share my experience in the hope that it raises awareness, to make it harder for people who are getting away with sexual abuse. The more public awareness there is, the harder it is for perpetrators to operate.

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

Signed... .....

Dated... 02/09/24.....