

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

CRD [REDACTED]

1. My name is CRD [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1948. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. My qualifications are [REDACTED] Dip ED (Reading).

Background

2. I have been Assistant Director of [REDACTED] at Wells Cathedral School, Director of [REDACTED] at Leighton Park, Director of [REDACTED] at Wells Cathedral School and Director of [REDACTED] at Loretto.

Employment with the school

3. I was SNR [REDACTED] at Loretto from 1988 -2000. I was involved in the development and delivery of the [REDACTED] curriculum in line with the statutory English Curriculum at all key stages and had engagement of [REDACTED] teachers and maintenance of individual teaching programmes.
4. I had involvement with all pupils in the school in [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
5. I was GTCS (General Teaching Council for Scotland) registered and was interviewed with my references being followed up. I completed a probationary period.
6. I had a weekly individual meeting with the Headmaster, Rev Norman Drummond by whom I was appointed to discuss primarily, [REDACTED] which involved the

whole school. When the Headmaster changed and Keith Budge took over these meetings stopped though I continued to meet with the deputy head Richard Selley on a weekly basis. There was no training out with full staff in- service provision.

Policy

7. I had no involvement in the forming of policy within the school

Strategic planning

8. I was not involved in the strategic planning within Loretto's. When the Headmaster changed there was a shift in curriculum emphasis and certain subjects were given a reduced profile including [REDACTED]. Design and Technology was removed from the curriculum. Some land and properties owned by the school were sold off. An all-weather sports pitch and new computer centre were the product of Appeals I think.

Other staff

9. It was common in Public Schools in those days for the SNR [REDACTED] to appoint the part time [REDACTED] teachers. I was responsible for the terms and conditions, as well as hourly rates. Liaison with parents was through me which included billing for the lessons given and adjudicating the occasional dispute regarding fees.

Recruitment of staff

10. I was only involved in the recruitment of [REDACTED] teachers directly though I did participate in the selection of a full time [REDACTED] Assistant which was a Headmaster's appointment. My only knowledge of recruitment policy and recruitment practices was that I wrote the job description for a new [REDACTED] Assistant.

11. References were obtained in respect of new staff and I was asked to comment on the aptitude and previous experience of applicants. I can confirm that referees on my behalf were spoken to but I cannot comment in respect of others.

Training of staff

12. I was not involved in training and/or personal development of staff. With regards to the training and/or personal development policies and how in practice these matters were implemented, I would say I have no direct knowledge of others but I was sent on a Leadership course and allowed to attend annual Conferences of [REDACTED] Teachers.

Supervision/staff appraisal / staff evaluation

13. It was left to me to supervise [REDACTED] teachers who were not regarded as members of staff. This was mainly to ensure a capable, productive and happy team who enjoyed working at Loretto and who motivated their pupils to achieve their aims. There was a wider Appraisal system for school staff. I was only expected to appraise my Assistant. I was appraised by the deputy head though I think only once.

Living arrangements

14. For the first couple of years myself, my wife and children lived in a school owned flat on the outskirts of the campus. Subsequently we moved to a school owned cottage about 15 minutes' walk away. Boarding houses for the pupils were in various properties around the campus.
15. Most other members of staff were accommodated in school owned property as part of their emolument. Some staff were on campus in private houses or flats; others attached to Boarding houses.

16. All staff were expected to act as tutors to a small group of pupils and do a weekly or twice weekly evening 'on duty' in a boarding house. This was a useful occasion to catch up with tutees and discuss how work was going and if they had any problems. It also took the pressure off House Masters. Tutors, as far as I know stayed in public and recreational areas of the house and never went into residential areas. This was the Matrons' domain.

Culture within Loretto School

17. The school had to be progressive to appeal to a diminishing market of traditional, often military parents. The demand for boarding places diminished and offering places for girls (previously only in the 6th form) was extended. This helped to create a more balanced social perspective and challenge the boys academically. They still regarded the school as male orientated, maybe due to a strong rugby tradition and a considerable loss of former pupils in Scottish regiments in the Second World War. More overseas applicants were sought. I never heard of fagging existing at the school.

Discipline and punishment

18. I think Housemasters/mistresses were responsible for discipline though I have no knowledge of disciplinary protocols or procedure. Probably just letters to parents. There was no formal policy in relation to discipline and punishment that I was aware of.
19. If I had any complaint regarding the work or behaviour of a pupil I would bring it to the attention of their Housemaster to follow up. I don't know if records were kept though I imagine Housemasters kept a file for each of their residents.

20. I don't think Senior Pupils had any specific entitlements to discipline more junior students other than to earn the respect of younger pupils and set an example. I was not aware of them having disciplinary responsibilities.

Day to day running of the school

21. I was not at any time involved in the day to day running of the school. For about an hour a week the whole school met in the Chapel to rehearse the hymns for Sunday and prepare an Anthem. During that time I might be said to have been running the school, though an organist and the Deputy Head were present as well.
22. If any child was being abused or ill-treated, I would have thought it would come to light at or around the time it was occurring. The role of Tutors and Housemasters was not confined to academic and behavioural aspects but also very much pastoral. Understandably, some may have been more approachable than others but pupils would almost certainly have taken any concerns they had for their friends to appropriate adults.
23. I never picked up any hint from the student body or elsewhere that there was anything of an abusive nature occurring during my period of employment at the school.

Concerns about the school

24. The school, to my knowledge, was never the subject of concern, in school or to any external body or agency, or any other person, because of the way in which children and young people in the school were treated. As such I am unable to provide detail of the nature of any concerns, any individuals who were the subject of concern, or the school's response to such.

25. Responsibility for communicating concerns would have been entirely at the discretion of the Headmaster. There was never in my time any discussion amongst the staff, covert or otherwise, that there were protection issues.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

26. If any child in the school, or another person on their behalf, wished to make a complaint or report a concern, Housemasters and Mistresses along with Tutors had a primary role as 'listening ears'. There was no official reporting process in place that I was aware of. Towards the end of my time at Loretto a member of staff was given the role of 'Protection' primarily I think to comply with Ofsted expectations.
27. I was not aware if complaints were nevertheless received or if such complaints were recorded or where they would be recorded.

Trusted adult/confidante

28. The Head of Geography, Duncan Wylie, was the nominated member of staff responsible for protection policies. The school always had a Chaplain, whose name I do not now recall, who may have been a more obvious choice for pupils who were unhappy to go to.
29. I didn't notice any changes in practice that happened over time though I imagine there was confidentiality surrounding what was or was not confided to this person. If children in practice raised concerns in this way then I was not aware of it.

Abuse

30. During my period of employment I was not aware of the school having a definition of "abuse" that it applied in relation to the treatment of children at the school.

31. The school had a high reputation and anything that threatened that would involve a meeting with the Headmaster. Beyond shouting at a child or not recognising genuine effort and achievement, I know of no more serious anecdotal examples. We were simply expected to behave as balanced, trustworthy adults with close teacher/parent relationships.
32. Parents paid high fees and rightly had high expectations. Many had our telephone numbers; especially overseas parents and we spoke with them much more frequently than teachers in state schools. Many came to Chapel on Sundays for which there was a three-line whip for all staff.
33. The centrality of the Chapel and the tradition of whole school singing weakened with a change of Headmaster. I felt something rather unique and important was lost.

Child protection arrangements

34. The establishment of a Protection Officer was a new initiative whilst I was there and may, to a certain extent, have displaced the Chaplain's role. I don't recall staff being given any specific guidance other than to refer any concerns we may hear of to the Protection Officer.
35. The guidance and instruction (if any) given to staff on how to handle, and respond to, reports of abuse or ill-treatment of children by staff, other adults, or fellow pupils was simply that there was now a designated member of staff.
36. As far as how much autonomy (including discretion) was given to staff in relation to child protection arrangements were concerned, I think we were all ready to listen to pupils' worries if they wanted to share them, though House Staff would be the conduits for any further action beyond a sympathetic ear.
37. I can't think of any child protection arrangements that were in place as such to reduce the likelihood of abuse, ill-treatment, or inappropriate conduct by staff, or other adults, towards children at the school. Visiting house staff, as distinct from

Housemaster or Assistant Housemaster who lived on the premises, didn't ever venture into dormitories. Girls' Boarding houses had only female staff tutors.

38. It seemed a sensible and workable premise.

External monitoring

39. The [REDACTED] Department received an exemplary Inspection report in 1993. Inspectors may well have visited other departments and aspects of the school's management at that time. The inspectors spoke with the children both individually and in a group out with the presence of teachers. They also spoke to me and gave me feedback.

Record-keeping

40. There was no obvious policy on record keeping though, as computers began to be introduced, this may have changed. I had a filing cabinet with records solely pertaining to visiting staff. I have no knowledge of, nor did I have access to, any central bank of information.
41. I cannot comment on the historical position as regards record-keeping as I was not aware of any.

Investigations into abuse – personal involvement

42. I was never involved in any investigation into allegations of abuse or ill-treatment of children at the school or into inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards children and I never heard of any such allegations or investigations.

Reports of abuse and civil claims

43. I was never involved in the handling of reports to, or civil claims made against the school by former pupils, concerning historical abuse.

Police investigations/ criminal proceedings

44. I have never been aware of police investigations into alleged abuse at the school nor have I ever given a statement to the police/the Crown concerning alleged abuse of children cared for at the school. Similarly, I have never given evidence at a trial concerning alleged abuse of children cared for at the school.

Leaving Loretto School

45. The Headmaster solicited signed statements from a couple of parents, a former colleague and several members of staff. They contained no accusations of abuse against me though there was one which referred to the feelings of a female member of staff who alleged I had made an embarrassing comment. There was no reference made to any pattern of my behaviour regarding pupils of either gender.
46. The statements as one might expect were anecdotal and some, entirely refutable, if not derisory. Nevertheless, they were designed to provide sufficient gravitas to suspend me. The Common Room was instructed not to have contact or speak to me.
47. Some weeks later, following a hearing comprising the Headmaster and Chairman of the Governors, at which I was represented by an ATL (Association of Teachers and Lecturers) representative, (I was not in the meeting) a notice was issued to the Staff saying that my departure from Loretto was not for any impropriety involving any of the student body.
48. Although every pupil in the school was involved with [REDACTED] performance; [REDACTED] examination results were exemplary and the take up of [REDACTED] tuition was high, the length of my suspension made it difficult for me to be reinstated and a financial package was negotiated. (As indeed was a very costly one for Mr Budge himself less than a year later.) *See appended Herald Newspaper article.
49. In addition I was furnished with a verifiable and complimentary reference, which sadly I have not kept. However, I continued work as a Supply Teacher for East and

Mid Lothian Councils until the first of both arthritic knees and their replacement operations forced my retirement.

50. The reason my contract at Loretto was terminated was posited as professional misconduct but beyond insinuations, there was nothing of an unprofessional nature in the Headmaster's efforts to discredit me. One statement for example thought I was 'slimey' whilst another reckoned I had searched their wastepaper basket. The School was very reluctant to take this to a Tribunal.
51. At the time, Loretto was in a desperate situation financially and the Headmaster removed Design and Technology from the curriculum and the staff who taught it.
52. A valuable Scottish painting from the common room was sold off, along with a former pupil's Victoria Cross, staff housing and part of the sports field. As an expensive member of staff, I too felt part of this ruthless personal survival strategy.

abusers

CRW

53. I hardly recall this staff member and think I only worked at the school at the same time as him when I first started at the school. I do not know how old he was. He taught only in the Nippers though I have no idea what subject he taught.
54. He was simply a member of staff of the Junior part of the school on a separate campus from me. All I recall about him was his elegant moustache. He was a nice man who appeared to do his job with efficiency and energy. I did not know him socially and had no significant professional contact with him.
55. I did not see him teaching the children though I may have seen him on playground duty so couldn't really say how he was with the children. I did not see him discipline children so cannot say how he did, or if he did, discipline children. I did not see him abuse children or hear of him abusing children.

QRO

56. I would not recognise QRO [REDACTED] and I think our time at Loretto's overlapped near the end of my tenure at the school. I don't know what age he was but he wasn't old. He was a [REDACTED] teacher. To me he was just another member of staff and our roles didn't overlap.
57. I remember nothing about him and heard nothing about him. I really didn't know him at all. I never saw him with any children and would only see him in the staff room.
58. I did not see him discipline children so cannot say how he did, or if he did, discipline children. I did not see him abuse children or hear of him abusing children.

Helping the Inquiry

59. Maybe Teacher Training or staff induction provision should give more emphasis to Child Protection. Nowadays social media platforms are forums for the sharing of both true and regrettably disingenuous information. I think schools should include programmes of learning which provide unequivocal guidance regarding the responsibilities of and behaviour towards all parties, whether teachers, pupils or support staff.
60. There could be more thought given to the role of parents. Peer to peer bullying probably constitutes the bigger threat to children's' welfare at present though it must be remembered that Boarding Schools are now very often rather more day schools with a boarding element.
61. 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..... CRD [REDACTED]

Dated..... 03 November 2020