

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FFG [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is FFG [REDACTED] My middle name of FFG [REDACTED] is my confirmation name. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1976. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going to boarding school

2. I was born in the former West Germany, on an RAF base, and lived there briefly afterwards but I spent most of my childhood in Scotland, apart from a brief time living in Cornwall with my family. My dad was in the forces and it meant we moved several times because of his various postings. My dad is called [REDACTED] and mother is [REDACTED]. I have two younger sisters. [REDACTED] is two years younger and [REDACTED] is four years younger than me.
3. My mum worked in various jobs from working in shops to a long career in social services and now in part of the NHS and in various locations. She was working in Morayshire, before moving to the Scottish Borders and works there now.
4. I initially went to a local nursery and primary school in Kinloss, where we lived at the time, and life at home was fine. My parents had not had a huge amount of education themselves and the priority for them was to give me and my sisters the best education possible. This had financial implications for my parents that I realise now, as a grown up, but I was unaware of this at the time.

5. At the age of eight I was sent to boarding school at Cargilfield School in Edinburgh. The family home at the time was only about five minutes away from Cargilfield. Because of my dad's postings they weren't at home a lot and it was better for me to board at school. The RAF might have helped with the fees if I boarded but not if I was a day pupil, but I don't know this for sure. My sisters were at home when I first went to Cargilfield.

Cargilfield School, Edinburgh

6. Cargilfield is a primary school that's stops at age twelve. I was happy at Cargilfield. I don't remember visiting the school before I started there, but I'm sure I would have. I probably did an entrance exam. It was a good school and had some good teachers. My maths teacher was especially influential and I was very good at maths. It was a fairly nice environment at the school. I didn't have a huge number of friends. There was a bit of bullying which was more traumatic for an eight year old when I look back at it now.
7. There were approximately 300 pupils at Cargilfield and there was a handful of day pupils, but it was mostly made up of boarders. I knew a couple of day pupils. Most of the pupils were staying in the school over the weekend. There were both boys and girls at the school. There were more boys than girls at the school and the percentages may have been 60/40.
8. It was essentially all one building and with no separation. The building was quite high with I think four floors. There was a church at one end. There was an ash court that was a small playground. There was a ground floor building on one side for sports and a swimming pool. On one side was a very tall building that was living accommodation for the pupils. On the other side were temporary classrooms and an art section. The Head teacher, Mr Reynolds, had a home on the school site. Some of the teachers had homes on the site too. People didn't have to leave the school site for most things. There was also a set of fields with a wood.

9. I had different teachers for different subjects and there were a lot of subjects on offer. There was a handful of female teachers in the school. I had a good positive experience of being in the Latin teacher's flat to listen to music with a group of children. My maths teacher, Mr Turnbull, was very good and very good at bringing out the best in me. I was disappointed to hear much later on that he had been asked to leave the school as he was gay. I heard this information from my sisters as they had discovered he was working elsewhere and not in teaching.
10. I had a positive experience of the school but not so much of the other pupils. I wasn't keen on them and they weren't keen on me so I kept to myself. Pupils kept to their year group and you didn't really mix outside of that. There were prefects and they had some privileges like their own common room. They were normal pupils, but treated with more respect. There wasn't a system where the younger pupils had to do chores for older boys. The teachers managed the school and spoke to the pupils directly and not through the prefects. The prefects had a light disciplinary role, but no extra authority because of their age.

Routine at Cargilfield School

Mornings and bedtimes

11. In the mornings the lights were switched on and we got up to get washed and dressed and brushed our teeth. Then we went to the dinner hall for breakfast and then onto classes. In the afternoon we had classes and sports lessons. There were a lot of sports on offer, cricket, rugby, hockey and tennis. I was quite good at cricket and hockey, but not so good at rugby. We would play other schools at sports and have trips out to matches. I was on the cricket team.
12. We had single beds in the dorm. I think there was about eight to ten beds in my dorm. I had a bedside cabinet and we could have teddies and personal effects. We had some of our own things. We each had a school trunk at the start of term and this was kept in the attic space. At night time you could get up and use the bathroom. It was all boys

in my section of the school. The girls were in a different section of the school. It was difficult to get from a boys' dorm to a girls' dorm.

Bed wetting

13. I can't remember any issues with bed wetting. Maybe it did happen on the odd occasion. There was one boy who was incontinent throughout the day. He would soil the bed and his sports clothes. His clothes were taken away and cleaned discreetly, but it was easily noticeable when it happened.

Washing and bathing

14. There was a bathroom with eight old-school iron baths. They were old fashioned and free standing with clawed feet. They were in an open room and not in cubicles. They'd be filled with water and we'd all dive in with a matron overseeing us. There was one child per bath. There was a concrete floor with a drain in the middle as water would go over the top of the baths. We had a bath regularly, but I don't know how often. The baths were eventually replaced with individual showers and they were walled off with doors.

Clothing

15. The uniform was a red tie, blazer, shorts, and trousers when you were older. At the weekend we walked to Barnton Church on a Sunday. We walked in a group and were wearing our kilts with a green jacket. I don't recall going out to get the uniform, but remember being given the uniform.

Meal times

16. The Head and the teachers would be on the top table with some prefects and the head boy. There was some age responsibility and older pupils took it in turns to sit at the top of one of the smaller tables to keep an eye on the younger ones. If there was any unruliness, the older pupil at the top of our table would tell the teachers. We'd all have

a job at the table such as to go to the servery to pick up food or clear away the plates. The tables were divided by age groups.

17. You had to have something to eat and you couldn't not eat some food, but you didn't have to eat all of it. There wasn't a huge choice, but there was enough. It was basic mass produced food, but it was ok. There was only an older pupil at the top of the table and he wouldn't force you to eat.
18. I got on well with the kitchen staff and I could get some extra food from the cooks. Otherwise there were no snacks between meals. I didn't have a tuck box at this school.

School

19. After lessons ended we had our evening meal and an hour of homework and study in the dinner hall with the tables cleared away. There were teachers in the hall for that. There was a little bit of a break after that and then it was bedtime.

Leisure time

20. We could play outside in the grounds and there was a wooded area. I can't recall playing inside if the weather was bad. There must have been things for us to do. There was a small indoor gym and climbing frame and a swimming pool in summer. The pool was boarded over in winter. The boards were rough and would leave splinters in your bare feet.
21. A boy called [REDACTED] was picking on me and he dragged me on my bum over the boards for a short distance. I was wearing my school trousers. I was worried about getting splinters and I knew you'd get them in your hands from touching the boards. At the time this happened I think we were both aged ten or eleven.
22. The school had a computer room that was quite sophisticated for its time. We could go in there to play computer games after church and there was a race to get a seat.

Also at weekends there were a lot of games of hide and seek into the evenings. We played tennis a lot. I can't remember organised activities at weekend.

23. There were school traditions that were spoken about. It was traditional to pour water on the ash court in winter to make ice and make a slide. Playing hide and seek was a big thing there and it involved lots of people. Playing with remote control cars, roller skates and skateboards also became a big thing at school.

Trips and holidays

24. There were no trips to the cinema. There were sports trips to play matches and the walk to and from the local church on Sundays. We could go skiing at Hillend on a Sunday instead of going to church and I did that regularly once I was old enough. It meant I couldn't go to the computer room. I got a love of skiing and we went on skiing trips to France. It was a lot of fun. The trips were paid for over and above the fees.
25. There was a Leavers Do which was an adventure weekend on the west coast for twelve year olds. I didn't go to mine as I'd badly injured my knee and I couldn't walk. I stayed in bed at school and was given a radio so I could listen to cricket commentary. Otherwise, we didn't have access to music or radios at school. We got a little bit of pocket money. There was a tuck shop in the library that was managed by the pupils I think.

Religion

26. There was a religious element to the school. Every morning we went to the chapel. I was in the choir and this meant I went to chapel early, straight after breakfast, to practice. Then the other boys lined up for going into the chapel and file in to sit on the benches. We sang songs and there would be hymns, the Headmaster would be at the front and made a speech.
27. I think we said grace before meals and this was led by the head table.

Chores

28. I don't remember anyone else on staff who came in apart from the cooks and don't know who did the cleaning. We took our own sheets off the beds at the end of the week. We didn't have any cleaning duties. We just cleaned ourselves and stripped the beds. I don't know who did the laundry. All of our uniform was labelled with our names.

Healthcare

29. There was a matron who was based in the school Sanatorium or San. There were several matrons who were like overseers and they were our immediate point of contact after classes. The teachers did the teaching and didn't look after us beyond that. The matrons were all female and I think one was on duty overnight and listening out for us.
30. If you were unwell you'd go to San or you'd be taken there. They were very good. I had a few trips and spills at school. There was also a nurse, I can't remember her name. She was very kind, in a nice way. I don't remember seeing a doctor. I went to hospital once as I had a green stick fracture in my arm from falling to the ground when I was on roller skates. A matron took me to the hospital and I think my mum came too and my arm was in a cast for six weeks.
31. I do recall doing the cough and drop test at the school. I remember being lined up with other children outside a room and being brought in one at a time. I recall there definitely being more than one adult in the room at the time of the test itself, possibly three adults.
32. I wasn't homesick at all. Being at school gave me freedom from my sisters. If you got upset you'd go to see a matron. I remember they gave me some privacy once when I needed it because I was hiding. It was the end of term rag and that meant pillow fights. Someone was having a go at me, an older pupil. I asked him to stop or I'd tell matron about the pillow fights. That set him off. I ran for cover and hid in the kitchens and I knew the other boys weren't allowed in there. By other boys I mean what felt like most

of the school. I didn't tell anyone other than the matron that other boys were chasing me. I'm sure teachers were aware of the pillow fights, but nothing got broken.

Relationships with other pupils

33. I was picked on by a few people who felt superior to me. I was quite small and had the nicknames [REDACTED], which I hated and [REDACTED] which I didn't mind. Some pupils in my class were horrible. There was no physical abuse. It meant a lot to me at the time. The teachers were nice, but I didn't mention what was going on to them. I think they were vaguely aware of it. I learned to avoid some people and I concentrated on my studies.
34. There was a library and I was in there a lot. It was in the centre of the school near to the Head's house. I read a lot. I think after school and sports were over you could go to the library and I was very keen on Greek Mythology. Another tradition was an end of term movie in the library as a treat.

Visits

35. I didn't have any visits from home. Boarders didn't get them. At the end of term I'd go home. The school made you write letters home once a week. They might also write in the letter anything the parents needed to know such as if a child had measles. I'm sure the letters were read, but there was no pressure to write anything specifically. I wasn't aware of not being able to tell your parents what you wanted.
36. I never went home at weekend. I think there were weekly boarders who did. Everyone went home in the holidays. There were no visitors coming in that I recall. Parents could come to watch sports matches such as the cricket. I don't remember any external visitors such as inspectors. There were school plays and parents were invited. My parents came to watch them.

Christmas and birthdays

37. I spent Christmas at home. I don't remember my birthday being in school time. I can't recall any birthdays for anyone else or any cake or cards.

Discipline

38. There were toilets in the school at the exit to the ash court. There was a long row of cubicles. I put my pencil case down on the floor there and that was a box that I'd taped down and padlocked as people had been getting into it. [REDACTED]'s older brother ripped the box open and told me they'd done it. I told the Headmaster as his office was not far from the toilets. They took the boy into the office and he came out in tears. I believe they used the ruler on his hands. I don't know if that was done by the assistant head or the head, but believe it was the Headmaster.
39. If you were caught misbehaving or out of bed in the evening there was one matron who would smack you two or three times on your bottom with a large old fashioned metal glasses case. I didn't misbehave to that level, but did see several people get that punishment. I think it was done over clothing, but I'm not sure, but you were certainly bent over. It was seen as acceptable by the pupils. No one wanted to have it done and it was painful. It was an accepted form of discipline. The teachers were dis-associated from that.
40. We could also be issued with lines to write for misbehaving in class. I got lots and lots of lines from the French teacher and I had to write them in French. I once asked for them to be reduced as it was too much. The Head was sympathetic and I don't think anyone had appealed to him before.
41. I don't know how the school communicated with parents. There may have been PTA meetings, but I wasn't part of them. There were several reports that would go home about progress.
42. I don't recall anyone being expelled from Cargilfield.

Leaving Cargilfield

43. I left Cargilfield when I was twelve as the school offered primary education only.

Gordonstoun School, Elgin, Morayshire

44. I had to take a common entrance exam to get into Gordonstoun and I sat the exam at Cargilfield. I did very well and got an RAF bursary. The decision for me to go to Gordonstoun was down to my parents and I had no part in it. Cargilfield was a feeder school for many different boarding schools and none of my classmates went on to Gordonstoun. I think we visited the school once possibly before I'd been accepted in. We went to meet the Head and I have a memory of a basic tour around the school but don't know if it was before or after I gained entrance.
45. Gordonstoun is a mixed sex, secondary school for the education of children up to the ages of 17 or 18. It is set in a rectangular complex with a road through the middle. Bruce House was one end of it and Duffus House at the other end. There was a sports centre, fields and woods. The main Gordonstoun House was in the middle and in the corner of that was the Refectory and Round Square House in another corner. Past that were the teaching buildings. There were other buildings that were maybe residential for staff. Certainly the housemasters and their assistants lived in the houses they were looking after. I think some teachers lived on site, but not all teaching staff were living on campus.
46. I believe all the pupils were boarding at the school. I was placed into Bruce House which is an all-boys' house and I only really knew this house. It was where I slept at night. Team sports were organised both by house and by age. There were several other houses which were all single sex. As well as Bruce House which was far away from the school, there was Altyre which was next to Bruce, Windmill which was over the road and on a little way and was a girls' house. Duffus House was miles away.

There was also Round Square and Gordonstoun House which was a girls' house. Down one road was Hopeman, Plewlands and Cummings Houses. The houses were generally far apart from each other. I had two good friends in Duffus House and this was some distance from Bruce. Duffus is virtually off the school grounds.

47. In Bruce House there were eight boys in my dorm and around 80 – 90 pupils in the house. The dorms were split by age so the younger boys were with their peers. Later on pupils could divide into twin rooms and into single study rooms when they were older. I'm sure there were official boarding house rules, but I can't recall anything being written down or being given a copy.
48. When I arrived at the school no one told me what the ethos of the school was and I learnt through my time in the school what was acceptable and what was not acceptable behaviour. When I started I was in 'old' Bruce House and this, along with Altyre and Plewlands were old buildings. A new Plewlands House and a new Bruce House were built nearer to the school and opened in 1989 or 1990, towards the end of my time in the school. I don't know if there was an initiation ceremony for new boys in Bruce House, but I would have missed it because of my delayed start at the school. I wasn't aware of it happening in my later years, but equally wasn't aware of it not happening and I wouldn't have known about it taking place.
49. In terms of staff there was the head teacher, who in my time was Mr Pyper, who was in overall charge and he had an assistant head teacher. Then the housemasters and the teachers. The housemasters were teachers too, but I wasn't taught by my housemaster. The system of authority in Gordonstoun I would describe as a fat pyramid with the head teacher at the top with the assistant head teacher. Below him he was assisted by housemasters and assistant housemasters who assumed control of the houses.
50. To one side of the pyramid was a number of teachers who controlled our lessons, but were not involved in our day to day lives. Below them were older pupils in your house who managed you within the house. If you were sent to the housemaster, or the Head and his assistant, it meant you'd done something seriously wrong. There was a head

boy and a head girl and there must have been prefects, but they were not singled out and I don't have distinct memories of them.

Routine at Gordonstoun School

First day

51. Two days before I was due to start at the school I broke my left arm and was in hospital for a few days. It meant I started at the school two weeks after the others and with my arm in a cast. I was just thrown in there. It was my dad who took me to the school and I was introduced to my housemaster, Ben Goss. Some of my first memories of the school were of running late from PE and making my way to another class like maths and it took me longer because of my plaster cast.

Mornings and bedtime

52. In the mornings the lights were turned on sometime like half past seven. We were expected to be up and quickly participate in the morning run, normally wearing what you got up in along with a pair of shoes. It was a Kurt Hahn thing. It was torturous and compulsory for everyone. It was organised by older pupils and prefects. They'd shout you out of bed. We ran around the boarding house. The new Bruce House building was quite large and it took a few minutes. In old Bruce House we had to run to a spot and back to the house.
53. At night I would sleep as soon as my head hit the pillow and had no issues with homesickness. I think lights out was for the whole house, but the senior pupils could be up later as they were in their own rooms. At night we were supervised by older pupils. The housemaster must have overseen it. Pupils had to go through the levels of authority. I would never have taken an issue direct to the housemaster it would go through a boy at prefect level and he would take it to the housemaster. I never had to approach an older pupil with an issue. I kept my head down and tried not to be noticed and had no reason to speak to older pupils.

54. In terms of any issues overnight, there was one boy called [REDACTED] who had epilepsy and had some fits in the night in the old house. I remember older boys helped him and took him out of the room and cleaned him up. I don't think the housemaster was involved and the boy wasn't taken to see matron. It was accepted it was part of his epilepsy.
55. If there was any trouble at night with a boy who was homesick or upset, I think the housemaster would have got involved if he saw anyone was distressed. My house master, Ben Goss, was very proactive as a person. He was someone who always wanted to be doing something, he didn't just let things happen. He wanted to be approachable and tried very hard at that. For someone like myself at that age, he was so forward that his manner scared me off.
56. The housemaster was in a pastoral role and meant to be a father figure to us, though it didn't come off that way but I suspect that was the intention. He had a flat that was in Bruce House where he lived and it had its own entrance. He lived there with his wife. She had no part in the school that I'm aware of. I was never aware of him having any social evenings where pupils might be invited into his home. There were house meetings, maybe once a week, when he would tell us things.
57. Unfortunately for me I quickly got isolated from that support mechanism by my abuser and was outside of any support network. It was like a grooming experience. At the school there was the culture that at the bottom you have the younger pupils, then the old pupils, then the housemaster and teachers off to one side on the pyramid system I described earlier. Above all that was the Headmaster who was almost a mythical figure who you never see and never want to meet.
58. I met the Headmaster when I was leaving the school and that was a scary, intimidating experience to see him in his office at the top of a big formal staircase. He was the person at the top of the pyramid of authority that I referred to earlier. He was high up in in his office, literally and figuratively.

59. I had to go and see him once before that when my report card was saying I was becoming isolated. Reports did get through to him. I'm sure it was arranged by my housemaster. It meant I then had to do some admin duties for the Head. I had a brief conversation with the Head when he explained what he wanted me to do. It was a daunting experience for me. I'm sure there was a lesson behind it for me. I got the feeling they were trying to bring me into the fold. I'm sure I wasn't the first person put into that position, by helping the Head. They did it for a reason and I think it was a positive effort on their part and they thought I would benefit from his experience. It just didn't work for me. I was scared of saying the wrong thing to him and I said as little as possible. It was well intentioned, but entirely inappropriate for my personality and if they knew me better they would have seen that.
60. There was no discussion about my isolation. I remember the emotion of it. I think the housemaster had a chat with me about it and told me that this was what they were going to do. My housemaster had been concerned I was isolated about one year before I left the school and well into the time when I became friends with my abuser. I can't remember the exact context. I got the feeling at the time my housemaster was saying you need to take more of a part in team activities. I imagine he saw I wasn't joining in with the activities the other boys were doing. I don't think it was to do with my academic levels. As far as I was aware I was a good student with decent grades.
61. For me I was just trying to stay out of trouble and off the radar and as long as going to see the Headmaster meant they wouldn't come back and speak to me I would do it. The housemaster wasn't saying, lets learn from this and it will improve your standing and confidence in the school. For me it was the wrong way of doing things. It made me more unwilling to engage with teachers and housemaster as I didn't want to that that again and I'd rather keep my head down. I don't know what age I was when I had to help the Head with admin, but maybe fourteen. That is a guess.

Mealtimes / Food

62. All the school went to eat in the same Refectory. There were loads of tables. You'd line up and then put your coat on a peg and hope it was there when you came back. I

quickly lost my coat. Then we'd line up for food and you picked the food yourself. You could sit down to eat with your friends. You could help yourself cafeteria-style at all mealtimes. It was good, varied food and I have no complaints about it. I don't remember any other kids having issues with food.

Washing / bathing

- 63. After the morning run we'd get washed and dressed and off to the Refectory for breakfast.
- 64. The washroom in old Bruce House was a line of showers and baths that were communal in one room. I'm less clear on the facilities in the new Bruce House. I think there were individual showers.

Clothing / uniform

- 65. The uniform was a light blue jumper and a shirt and trousers. We had to wear it at weekends as well as every weekday.

School

- 66. In the mornings we'd come out of the Refectory and straight to our classrooms. I was in different classrooms for different subjects and in some different buildings too. I thought the quality of the teaching was reasonable. Although the geography teacher used to just read his notes off a projector slide as we copied them out. The maths teacher was helpful.
- 67. I was mostly with the same pupils for most topics and classes were segregated out in levels of ability. I left in 1991. There was some careers advice at GCSE level. I think pupils sat A' levels at the end of school.
- 68. At age 14 to 15, after your GCSEs, you joined units for one of the services. These included, Lifeguards, Mountain Rescue, Fire Service or Army Training Corp (ATC).

After GCSEs I wanted to be in ATC, but got put in Lifeguards. I got issued the kit but never did any activities as I'd left the school before my GCSEs.

69. You'd go to the Refectory for lunch in the middle of the day before classes and sports in the afternoon. There was PE and sports every day. There was a variety of sports, but no cricket. I did cross country running. There were no races against other schools, but we did run against other Gordonstoun houses. I was always at the back in races and wasn't especially fit. I don't know if other sports were played against other schools. After sports classes you had some time to yourself. Then dinner and back to the house for evening study in a room set aside for your own study.

Religion

70. The school was not religious. We went to chapel every morning in the main house. There was no choir. We sat in accordance with our houses. It was compulsory. It was more of an assembly than a religious service.
71. I was confirmed as Roman Catholic when I was at the school along with a small group of other pupils. I had to learn about the religion and attend a ceremony. You got to add a new name to the name you already had and that appealed to me. I didn't go to mass afterwards.

Trips / Holidays

72. Once a year we did a clean-up of the local beaches and cliffs. We were also taught seamanship at Hopeman Harbour and were taught to sail and row. We also did canoeing at Hopeman Harbour. There was also Duke of Edinburgh camping in the Scottish hills and what the school called expeds. We were provided with wet weather gear. I borrowed a rucksack from my father's friend. On one of these trips I stayed in a tent with my two friends from Duffus House. One of them lit the gas stove inside the tent and it burned a hole in both the tent and my borrowed rucksack. The teachers were on this trip but not camping near us.

73. I can't recall any external visits or any inspections. The police came once as there was a bomb scare in my house. It turned out to be just a suitcase with wires in it.

Leisure time

74. There was a bit of free time after evening study. In the boarding house there was a TV room and there was always someone older dictating what was on the television. In the new boarding house there was a pool table. You could go out if you wanted to, not many people did, and socialise with other houses. That was frowned upon unless you were a member of the cool clique. There were a lot of groups within groups. I wasn't in a clique so became isolated. It was a very, very cliquey school.
75. If you were good at sports you'd have a group of friends who were all sporty. If you were good at chess you'd have a group of friends from chess. With all the services you'd be expected to join later on, you'd be in a group with the Fire Service, ATC or Life Guards. I was not a member of any of those groups and didn't have any one to hang around with. The most socially successful people were a member of a group. Your default group could be your year group in the house. I wasn't in that as I wasn't in a team sport and didn't represent my house in that way. The groups were fairly territorial as well.
76. At Gordonstoun, socialising outside of your house was not just frowned upon, it was almost a dangerous thing. My old boarding house was next to old Altyre House and they were adjoining buildings. If I was found in Altyre House on my own I'd be concerned for my safety. They'd want to know why I was there and tell me I should get out. You would need an escort, someone showing you through another house, as the pupils were very territorial. I wouldn't have stepped into another house without being with someone from that house. I don't know where that culture came from.
77. If someone from another house came into ours they'd be kicked out unless they had been allowed in by someone from the boarding house, and generally that meant older pupils. If someone of my year group wanted to come into my house, I wouldn't let that happen. I had to meet my friends in the Refectory, the gym or in the classroom as they

were neutral territories. I had two good friends from Duffus House and I couldn't go to their house and we never met in my house.

78. At weekends we could go off site to the local town of Elgin. We'd go in a group as the town was not fond of seeing the Gordonstoun uniform and we were required to wear it even at weekends as well as every other day. I didn't go into town often. I went with friends if I did and we didn't get any trouble. I heard of people having some trouble.
79. I don't recall any organised activities at weekend.

Personal possessions

80. I had a little room set aside for studying and living in and that room contained my belongings. I had a tuck box and a Hi-fi stereo. I was sharing with one or two others for a while and later on, in new Bruce House, your bedroom was also your study room. At first in the area where I slept you had just your clothes and a bed and most of your stuff was in the little study room.
81. I could lock things away in my tuck box but mine was broken open so I had to get a stronger padlock. Nothing was taken out of it and they'd just opened it for the sake of it. I didn't have much money in it, just enough for a take away at weekends. It was only safe as long as nobody wanted what was in it. The housemaster might investigate this and ask for items to be returned. Otherwise my personal things would be books, toys, games and snack food.

Birthdays and Christmas

82. I was at home over the Christmas holidays and I wasn't aware of any pupils staying on campus in the holidays. If a pupil, particularly an older one, had a birthday at school there would be a celebration in the Refectory. Younger pupils of the opposite sex would be told to line up and kiss the older pupil on the cheek. It was a Gordonstoun ritual for birthdays.

Visits / Inspections

83. I didn't get any visits and I was just dropped off and picked up at start and end of term. Other pupils didn't have visits. In the old Bruce House it would have been easy to see if anyone got a visit as you'd see the car outside. There was no visit day set aside. If I'd seen parents wandering around the school during the daytime I would have spoken to them. It was a surprise to see anyone other than a boarding house resident inside Bruce House.
84. I don't remember my parents coming to a sports event. They would have received school reports at the end of term and a letter if there was an issue. There was a pay phone in the old boarding house so you could phone home if you had change. I didn't write a lot to my parents, but my dad used to write to me. I would get parcels from home with snacks and a card and perhaps a letter.

Siblings/contact

85. My sisters also went to boarding school and both were at Kilgraston. One went to a day school at first before boarding and the other boarded throughout when she was old enough. The three of us would be at home in the holidays.

Healthcare

86. There was a Sanatorium, or San, near the teaching block. I went to San for routine jabs. I didn't have any injuries at Gordonstoun. I had dental treatment when I was at home.

Running away

87. I don't remember anyone running away.

Bed Wetting

88. The only issues I recall with bedwetting would have come from the boy I referred to earlier who had epilepsy and who had fits at night time.

Discipline

89. I remember people moved between boarding houses after hours and one boy got expelled for that. I don't know his name. He went into a girls' house and did not return before curfew. I don't know if the boarding houses were locked at night and I never tried to leave the house at night. In our house there were several different ways you could have climbed in or out through the windows or knocked on one of the student's doors and told them to let you in. They might then get a telling off from the pupil inside the house for being in the wrong place. It's unlikely the housemaster would find out unless you were doing it at curfew time when the housemaster would be roaming the house to make sure everyone's in bed.
90. The school couldn't have prevented someone getting in or out unless they patrolled outside the building at night. Gordonstoun was very strict about out of hours interaction between boys and girls. As mentioned the boy went over to socialise with some girls and stayed too long and was caught coming out of the boarding house at night.
91. Others were expelled for smoking at the cliffs which weren't far away. I am confident they would get a series of warnings first before being expelled. Any expulsion wasn't made known to other pupils, they would just vanish. Any suspension of pupils wasn't advertised. A pupil could just disappear for two weeks and rumours would go round. There was smoking and drinking and I don't know if there was drug use.
92. Minor issues of discipline depended on where the issue had happened. In the classroom the teacher would verbally discipline a pupil. The teacher would write a note and the housemaster would talk to you. There was no corporal punishment I was aware of.

93. Boarding house pupils would mainly discipline each other and say they were making you tougher for the real world. I would say this was something devised by the pupils themselves and backed up by the way that the school was run. Any pupil who felt like they wanted to exercise their power could and the school enabled this behaviour because they were trying to make you physically fitter and tougher. If you'd done something stupid in the evening time when there is time to issue punishment, you could be sent on a run to the chapel and back with some information you'd be expected to read from one of the gravestones.
94. If you got caught misbehaving by the housemaster you'd get a proper telling off. If you stole something it would go up the scale, but anything less than that was dealt with by an older pupils.
95. In old Bruce House older pupils used to subject younger boys to be punished by being put in cold bath water in their swim suit. You had to get in and put your head under water before quickly jumping out as it was freezing. It was a common punishment that pupils could hand out. It was a punishment that was a level below the housemaster. I don't know if he ever knew about it. If he knew I'm sure he would have stepped in.
96. I had the cold baths quite a few times. The worst one I did was when I had to jump in and out of a cold bath eight times in a row once. I remember shivering for some time after this. It was not just one pupil who did them. Other, older pupils watched you go through it and someone would watch at the door. They weren't shouting at me while it happened, but it was still fairly intimidating and there was no question of you not taking the cold bath.
97. There wasn't a system of fagging. The act of running to the chapel and back wasn't because you'd done something wrong. You'd do that because you'd stepped into the wrong place and upset an older pupil. The older boys were flexing their muscles because they could. A junior boy was not assigned any specific older pupil.

Abuse at Gordonstoun

98. My housemaster, Ben Goss, got wind of bullying in the house and he'd heard rumours of pupils being made to hold onto hot pipes with a knife held underneath them. I assume nobody would ever be stupid enough to do that and I assume the knife would take the knife away before the pupil let go of the pipe. He sat us all down in the common room and told us in a stern voice that he didn't want to ever come across this happening. Something must have reached him for him to do that. I didn't experience it at all.
99. Once I was standing outside of the Refectory which was next to the path through the woods. A pupil put a knife to my throat. I think there was somebody else there. I don't remember names. I stood there not moving. He took it away after about eight seconds and made a joke and walked off, I quickly made myself scarce. He was a little bit older than me. He thought it was funny. I don't know his name. He might have been from Altyre House. I didn't tell anyone this happened at the time and I never told anyone about it at all before I told the Inquiry.
100. I was abused by my physics teacher. I had begun to see him less as a teacher and more as a friend. He put himself in that position when talking to me. When the abuse happened, the one person in authority I would have told was him. If I had been abused by any other teacher I would have been comfortable telling him what was happening to me. By the time the abuse happened he had been in a position of trust and friendship with me that I would speak to him about stuff and not to anyone else about stuff. I wouldn't have felt comfortable talking to my housemaster about it, but in accordance with Gordonstoun's structures that was the person I was normally expected to go to. When it happened I wanted to absolutely pretend it didn't happen and while it was happening, that it wasn't happening. I saw it as being my fault. I assumed I must have done something to make it happen.
101. My physics teacher was called Andrew Keir and he'd been my teacher since I started at Gordonstoun. I would guess he was aged around thirty and he was strong and fit.

He also had a boat in Hopeman Harbour and he was involved in the school's seamanship classes. He lived off campus in Hopeman which wasn't far away, but a long way to walk for someone younger. I'm sure that when I turned up in his physics class, because of my general nature I put my studies first. I kept my head down and didn't want to bring attention to myself, least of all from the other pupils but also from the teachers. I was a prime target for him to easily befriend. I enjoyed physics and I was good at it.

102. I trusted him. I had several conversations with him. I also knew him through judo classes in Gordonstoun and he was one of the teachers, but you don't chat in those classes. We could talk when the class had ended and people are milling out. Judo involved a small group of boys. The routine was structured and controlled and it is not conversational. Judo was never in the morning, it was always in the afternoon or evening and it took place in the gym.
103. We would speak in the Radio Hamming Club I was involved in. This was a club that took place in the physics labs when you could build up long wave radios and have conversations with people. It was a club for a handful of pupils. It meant he could talk to me on a one-to-one basis. There was just four or five of us in the large lab and he could have easily had a conversation with any of those people while everyone else continues to work or listen to their radios. Radio Club was in the evening and I could be late getting back to the boarding house.
104. Our friendship evolved further in my last year at Gordonstoun school. I wrote a diary, which I still have, and can be made available to the Inquiry, that covered a little bit before and a little bit after this time period and it was used in the subsequent court case. I trusted him and didn't see him as a teacher and not an authority figure. He was a friend who happened to be older.
105. One of the first things I remember was he marked me down on a physics paper. I was always striving to get 100%. I went to him with the paper and told him I thought I'd done better than that mark suggested. He said he couldn't give me a higher score because it would look like favouritism. It bugged me. If I did well on the paper I should

get the grade I deserved and if it's favouritism and we have this friendship then why aren't you marking me even higher. I don't know how often it happened, but I called him out on it once.

106. He did ad hoc judo lessons outside of judo class. He did it at Radio Hamming Class. It wasn't judo. There was no bowing and there were none of the routines or rituals that have to take place in a judo session. It was just two people who were practising some grappling on the floor. The grappling he was doing was quite inappropriate. It was over my clothing, with his hands over my bottom and privates and prolonged. He was an experienced teacher and he put me in positions that I couldn't escape from. He wasn't hurting me. He took advantage of me, in the back of the physics classroom with other people in it. I've got notes in my diaries where we've had 'judo sessions' outside of judo classes. There was no reason to do that. He was continuing to take advantage of me.
107. In Radio Hamming Class there were other people there. I remember when the class finished, two of the other children said Mr Keir is a 'bit handsy'. I remember I thought 'why on earth didn't you tell me beforehand. If you'd told me I could have said we'll do judo another time.' It ties in with everything else looking back on it and it normalised that behaviour slightly. If other kids are saying he's a bit handsy then maybe it's not so bad and I shouldn't be worrying about it. I tried to put it to the back of my mind.
108. Then he also invited me several times to the school pool late into the evening. Before lights out, but it was already starting to get dark. I know this because it's written in my diary that I was invited to the pool and he didn't turn up. There was some reason like he was on a fire drill. There were several occasions when I went there and waited for him to turn up and he didn't so I went back to my house. The pool was not far from Bruce House.
109. One time he turned up, he convinced me to go into the pool. It was just us two. He took off his swimming costume in the pool and invited me to do the same. I said no, I was uncomfortable and I wanted to go. I told him I wanted to go and he let me go. I remained in my swimming gear. We showered after our swim. We both showered in

the same area for the boys, which was unusual as the staff had their own area for showering. I thought that was a bit weird at the time, I wasn't really sure what was going on. I had no idea of his motivations. Then we went our separate ways.

110. The pool was within the same building as the gym and the gym was closed, I can't recall if it was locked, at that time in the evening. No-one else was swimming. The lights were off and no-one else can see into the pool because of the steamed up windows and the gym is off the road. There was no reason for him being caught doing that. There was no reason at all for anyone to walk past the windows and see any movement because the windows faced empty fields and not the road.
111. This happened in my final year at the school. I believe I was fifteen at the time. I was very uncomfortable and very confused by this. If it had been one of my friends I probably wouldn't have tried to escape the situation quite so firmly.
112. He also asked me one time if I wanted to play some computer games in the physics lab. There was a table with an old fashioned computer on it and it had some games on it. I'd seen it in Radio Hamming Club. I knew it was there. He took me to the physics lab under the offer of playing video games. The lab was locked, it was dark and no-one was in there.
113. The computer was set up for the games and he sat immediately next to me on my left. He put his arm around my shoulder and round my waist and undid my belt buckle and put his hand down there under my underwear and kept it there, moving for a few minutes. I had to pretend nothing was happening and focus on the computer game. Eventually I said I want to go now. He stopped and I remember very vividly, he took his arm back and he had massive sweat patches under both arms. The smell still affects me. I did up my belt and trousers and didn't speak about it and got up and left the building. It wasn't spoken of again and I wanted to forget it had happened and block it out. It happened on the one occasion.
114. It nearly happened again about a year later, when I was sixteen. It wasn't in the physics lab then as I had been removed from Gordonstoun by then. He still had a mental hold

on me. I still have letters of communication from him to me about a box of radio hamming stuff I left at school. I foolishly met up with him after I'd left Gordonstoun. I was on holiday from my next school, Stonyhurst, and my parents still lived nearby Gordonstoun which is how I know he has a boat at the harbour. I wrote in my diary that I went to see him. He showed me the boat. His home was in Hopeman near the harbour.

115. I have a vague recollection of his wife being at his house at the time. He took me to see his boat and he put his arm round my shoulders as we were stood looking at his boat in the harbour. I desperately had to get out of there. It was reminiscent of what had happened before. At the door when I was saying goodbye, he stood at his door and said 'let's keep this our little secret'. This was the first time he talked about it being our little secret.
116. At the time I didn't tell anyone what had happened for a few reasons. One, I wanted to pretend it didn't happen and two, I assumed it was a one off and an error on his part. I must have done something to give him the impression that it was ok and it was just me. If I can forget about it, it doesn't matter to anyone else. I didn't want to affect his marriage or him. Lastly, my parents had sacrificed an awful lot to get me to Gordonstoun and would blame themselves for sending me there.
117. What would have helped me to disclose the abuse at the time? Mental health back then was a mythical creature. It didn't exist at Gordonstoun. It was a physically orientated school. If you were good at sports it meant you'd be doing well in the school. It's a good academic school, but its focus at that time was physical activity. Mental health was neither here nor there. If you had a mental health issue you would have been frowned upon or you would have been told to 'buck up, you'll be alright and stiff upper lip'. I think it would have helped to have a school counsellor, someone that was safe to talk to without being judged or disciplined. However that would not have been feasible given the size of the school grounds. By design it would be the house master that pupils would speak to, however as previously mentioned I had been isolated from that support mechanism and viewed the house master as someone to avoid for fear of getting in trouble. Really the only real help would have been a change of ethos at

the school. If child abuse had been brought to the pupils attention as something that was wrong and something that should be reported, that might have made me come forward rather than keeping quiet about what happened. In my opinion the school were not interested in raising awareness of child abuse, what constituted it and how to report it, for fear of bad publicity and quite simply that it would negatively affect them financially. There was no complaints procedure at the school that I was aware of.

Leaving Gordonstoun

118. I got myself kicked out of Gordonstoun. I went on a cross country run and I found a man's wallet on a path inside the forest and just off the road. There was no money in it, but it was from someone who worked in the local area. There was a paper RAF identification card and some credit cards in it. I never took any money from it. I didn't do anything with the credit cards. I put the credit cards and ID card into my wallet and I left my wallet with those things in it in the phone box to be found. I had some personal identification in my own wallet. I took the wallet I'd found away with me.
119. Very, very quickly after that I was spoken to by my housemaster. This happened within about one hour of me leaving my wallet in the phone box. These events happened towards the end of the school day. My housemaster said to choose one person and go and stay in the san overnight with them while they work out what was going to happen and I could sit and think about what I had done. I chose someone in my year who was popular. We both slept in the san that night. I was separated from my classmates apart from him. My friend wanted to know why I had done it and I gave no answer.
120. The next morning I met with the head teacher and my parents came to the school and I was in Mr Pyper's office. The Head suggested that I leave the school and then strongly suggested, then asked me to leave the school. He said something along the lines of I suggest you leave the school before we take this any further. If you won't leave I'll have to expel you. I suspect in hindsight that he didn't want to have an expulsion on his school records, hence giving my parents the opportunity to withdraw

me as a pupil. I was effectively expelled from the school at that point in time. After that I didn't see anyone else in the school and I had to pack up my things and leave.

121. My parents were disappointed and angry. They didn't direct their anger at me. Driving home afterwards, we stopped at the side of the road at a little church and went for a walk. They were asking me questions. I wanted to be out of there. I couldn't lie to them and definitely not in a religious place. It was desperately uncomfortable. I couldn't answer any of their questions. I just wanted to get back into the car and leave.
122. I can't talk to them about things. It's not great relationship, but they are wonderful people. We don't have in depth conversations. The relationship has developed like that over time and a barrier has developed between us. It was my fault I left the school, but I now know not my fault I was abused. I couldn't tell them what had happened to me.
123. My parents still have no idea why I did it. One day I might tell my parents and I know they will be devastated by it. They put me in that situation and I know I got myself out of that situation, but they would still think it was their fault and it's not.

Stonyhurst College, Lancashire

124. Stonyhurst was the best boarding school that would accept me. It was mid-term when I arrived. The college was different to Gordonstoun in that it was one massive building. Everything you needed was there and you could stay inside for a whole week and not need to leave the building. The college was all-boys apart from a handful of girls.
125. The structure was organised by year groups or what they call play groups. There was someone who managed each play group. The structure of reporting anything would have been your play group master or the assistant headmaster. There wasn't a layer between you and the housemaster. The play group master was more visible and more respected. Gordonstoun was divided up by houses, but in Stonyhurst we were divided up by year groups. It was easier to make friends in your year group. You didn't interact

with the year above you. Older pupils might look after pupils in detention and that was it.

126. Generally I wasn't with the same kind of people. At Stonyhurst I didn't socialise with a huge number of people. I had a different focus and my studies didn't mean as much to me. I left Gordonstoun just before GCSEs. I took my exams in Stonyhurst a few weeks after my arrival there. I still did very well in my maths exam.
127. My view of authority figures and teachers had been damaged by my experience in Gordonstoun. I questioned the teachers more and didn't trust what they told me. Then I stopped questioning them at all. I asked a maths teacher a question and got a snappy response. I got some looks from other people in the class. I just stopped taking part and didn't ask any more questions. My trust had gone in all ways.
128. I previously decided I wanted to do physics as I was good at it and enjoyed it, but dropped it within the year. I still kept maths as my best subject. I went from A+ in my GCSE to D at A' Level. I'd found my GCSE maths so easy that I went through the paper twice and had so much time to spare I fell asleep in the exam.
129. After school I went straight to college with a D in maths and an E in design and technology. I chose design and technology because the learning was workshop based and not on a teacher/student environment and you were left to yourself to study and learn. At Gordonstoun my decline would have been queried, but at Stonyhurst they had no comparison. Nobody spoke to me about my performance and what they could do to help.
130. I witnessed some bullying. I required extensive dental treatment when I was at Stonyhurst. I got some teeth knocked back into my mouth in a deliberate act. I think I was knocked out and woke up on the floor. One guy was picking on someone younger than him and calling him names. I clipped him on the back of his head and told him to stop it. The older boy punched me that evening. I went to the housemaster straight away. The older boy left at the end of the year. I was not aware of him being disciplined. He wasn't officially dealt with and I think at the end of year he was let go.

131. I had no choice but to speak to the housemaster because my tooth had been knocked back into my mouth. He was a scary man, very tall and with a permanent smile on his face so you couldn't tell if he was serious or making a joke. He was fair handed. I'm sure he would have spoken to the boy who punched me. I didn't know about it as I was taken off to have my teeth dealt with.
132. I had a temporary dental fix and another tooth was straightened when I was at school before I had a more permanent solution when I was back in Scotland. The staff at Stonyhurst didn't speak to me about any ongoing issues. They took me off to the school medical centre initially and then off to the dentists.
133. I got in a fight with another boy. He stole something from someone I knew so I stole from him. It never would have happened at Gordonstoun. No-one would have believed it of me. The boy had a lot of friends and they tried to convince me to leave the school. It ended when I walked past a group of them just outside the school building and one of them punched me in the stomach. I was aged sixteen or seventeen and in a more adult situation.
134. It was easier to make friends at Stonyhurst as you weren't so far apart from each other. At weekends I was off-site a lot with day pupil friend. I was less worried about following the rules.

Life after being in school

135. At Stonyhurst it was assumed pupils would go on to university. I had spent a lot of time working on computers at my various schools and enjoyed it. After leaving school I went to Nottingham Trent University to do a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Computer Studies.
136. While studying the HND I repeated my second year as I failed it first time round, but didn't complete my course and I left before it had ended. I got a job as a security guard

at night to fund my repeated second year, which should have been my final year of HND. I didn't finish my final year as I wasn't motivated by studying. I also had a job and it was difficult to study while working nights.

137. I moved on from studying and my job as a security guard. I did admin work and got a temping job with an agency working with social services. While doing my admin job I was helping to fix stuff on computers there. I then became a temp for the council, then I moved to work for IT support on their telephone helpdesk. I got a permanent job there. I was the computer engineer who went out to schools. I was progressing up the career ladder, but in slow steps. Now I'm an IT Manager for a commercial insurance broker and I manage anything they have that is IT related.

Impact

138. Had I got better grades and went onto a degree course rather than an HND course, I would have been working in a role like I am now straight from university. I didn't have the qualifications and have had to work my way through various jobs to progress. I had the ability and the intelligence, but not the education. I did an aptitude test when I started my current role and scored very highly on the logical thinking. It has shown I always had the skills to have had this kind of role. There has been an economic impact on me of events at Gordonstoun.
139. I have a civil claim against Gordonstoun and that has been going on since December 2017. I have instructed solicitors on this matter called Thorntons. The wheels of civil cases turn very slowly and it's very frustrating. I don't know why. The man has been convicted but Gordonstoun refused to give me any help towards counselling and therapy until August 2021 but are still not accepting liability. I have had long sessions with a psychologist who has produced a report for my civil case and has clearly said that therapy would benefit me in dealing with long term issues.
140. There is a literal taste in my mouth when I can smell that man's sweat. It's a reoccurring thing. It has made intimacy throughout my life particularly difficult and has had a huge

impact on my relationships. A certain smell or a sight brings flashbacks. It's like I'm trying to keep a particular door closed, but there is something on the other side of the door trying to open it.

141. Until recently I wasn't aware of how much of an impact until my wife explained it to me. She told me that since I went to the police in 2015 I've been a different person. I'm in the centre of that and I couldn't see it. I didn't see any change in myself and someone else had to tell me my personality had changed. It was only when I had the opportunity to step back and look more objectively that I could see it. The impact of that has been enough for us to now be living in separate places. Things are barely amicable and shared care of our two young children is the priority.
142. I have not had any counselling or support. Up until 2015 I only ever told one person that I was abused as a child at school and I didn't give any more detail than that. This was in the time when the revelations about Jimmy Savile were coming to light in the media. That was a long term girlfriend and the relationship ended shortly afterwards.
143. If Gordonstoun had come back to me last year with an offer of funds for counselling I would possibly still be with my family. As it is it has caused a break up with my wife and family. If I'd had help it might not have happened. Gordonstoun had not offered any support at all. They have recently tried to speak to Mr Keir's own solicitor to make him liable for the damages done. This is where my current funding for treatment has come from.
144. I have two close friends with a similar history and we provide support for each other and they have got me through a lot. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was mentioned several times in my psychology report and I have symptoms of it, but in the end the psychologist concluded I don't have it. I have mentioned the issues to my GP just so it is on my record. I have been given a number to ring if I need help. I'm not someone who asks for help and I try to be self-sufficient. My parents have been very helpful regarding the relationship breakdown and they are providing me a lifeline just now.

145. My lack of trust in authority has not been helpful to my interaction with bosses. I'm lucky now in that I have a lot of respect from the main boss in the company. If I have respect from someone then that translates into a good rapport. In the past it has been difficult. I don't want to involve myself and hasn't helped my job prospects. I've got to where I am now based on my ability.
146. It has affected my trust in any relationship without a shadow of a doubt. It gets to me. I would question someone's motivation for their behaviour and my thoughts would run along unhelpful lines, because of my inability to trust them
147. There has been an impact on my relationships with my children. I struggled to connect with my first child who was born in 2015 shortly before I made my report to the police. I was worried that people could tell that I was a victim of abuse like it was some sort of smell or infection and that I would somehow infect my little girl with it. I know it sounds strange. As a result there was always a little distance between me and her.
148. I would send my children to boarding school as day pupils, but not as boarders. It is a rewarding system for some children with a certain character. I think I'm a good judge of whether or not my child would thrive in a boarding school environment. I wouldn't want my child to go and would prefer to move to an area with a good day school.
149. On a slightly more positive note, if I had not gone to Gordonstoun I would not know two people who are very good friends of mine. I had to go through some very dark stuff to get that. I'll take what good I can from it.
150. I'm prone to outbursts of anger and I am generally not a confrontational person. More specifically I feel anger for no particular reason and it lasts for a whole day. I have never directed that at a person. It's like there is a cloud above my head for no reason. I have to go outside and take it out on an inanimate object. I talk it through with my two friends who have had similar experiences and that calms me down.

151. The abuse has impacted my feeling of self-worth and self-esteem. I get migraines and they have become more frequent and more powerful in the last few years. I have had them a lot more in recent times and I've had to learn to manage them with medication.

Reporting of Abuse

152. I didn't tell anyone until I got a letter from Gordonstoun in November 2015. There had been reports of child abuse in the school. That was the first time I realised it wasn't just me. No names were given, I just knew it was him. I called the police and made them aware of what had happened several years ago. I wasn't aware of any time limits on reporting of historical child abuse. That was the last thing on my mind.
153. I gave a statement to the police. It was very difficult and I felt a lot of pressure to give them as much information as possible. From the first call I did everything I could to help. I was very concerned about my anonymity because of my parents and I still am. The police who took my statement were very good and trained in dealing with my kind of interview. It was a very different experience to when I left Gordonstoun. I got taken, by my parents to see the police after they found the wallet. I got a proper telling off by two officers. I'm sure they had the best intentions, but it was not helpful for someone who had just had their trust in authority figures shattered.
154. There was a court case involving two other men who had been victims. I know of at least two other victims who were not involved in the case. I gave oral evidence in court. A screen was set up so he couldn't see me. The court process was very nerve wracking and difficult. There were lots of things I wanted to say but was restricted by what I was being asked.
155. It went to a level of court too low for his offence. The judge said in the final statement that it should have taken place in a higher level court. The maximum penalty they could give was entirely inadequate. It was a one year sentence. He would have been out in six months.

156. I spoke with the other two victims at court. If there wasn't the three of us there wouldn't have been enough evidence for a conviction. I was able to take my diary to the police with details of events at the time. There was a pattern of events that applied to other victims. The incident in the swimming pool was important to the evidence of the other two men and was a reoccurring theme.
157. From the victims I'm aware of, we know from my abuse and one other person who was abused that there is a thirteen year window between the two. There were other victims in the middle of that. I can guarantee that in that thirteen year window Keir was actively grooming or abusing people and it wasn't picked up. One of those brought Keir to the attention of the school and if they had listened my abuse wouldn't have happened. I know this pupil now as an adult and we have spoken about it. He worries that he was not forceful enough when he reported and allowed his account to be dismissed.
158. With regard to the trial I was happy that I'd done my best. There were things I would have liked to have been able to say, but it was a combined effort between the three of us. At the very least we got a conviction and there was a feeling of release. I was not particularly happy with the outcome. It should have been in a higher court and the judge commented it was an inadequate sentence for the crime.
159. There was no communication from the Procurator Fiscal about why the trial was held in that court. Their correspondence was just what was going to happen and not why it was going there. There was a woman in court who looked after us outside of the legal representatives and she was very good. We still had to cross paths with the defence team, including my abuser, at one point in the court building and that was uncomfortable.

Records

160. My school diary was accessed by prosecution for the court case. In terms of official records the school has very little record of me and this came out as part of the civil

claim. I have lots of school photographs. I don't have my report cards. I have some letters from after I left the school. When I made a report in 2015 I went through my parents' stash of stuff that they kept relating to school. There were my diaries, letters and cards from my abuser and from my housemaster after I left the school. It showed I kept up a communication with my abuser and his communication with me.

161. When I was still at the school I went to stay with a friend from the school and I left something behind at his family house. He still had some of my belongings after I'd left Gordonstoun so suddenly. I received a simple letter from the housemaster saying he hoped I was doing well and he'd spoken to my friend [REDACTED] and he didn't have any of my stuff. It was formulaic but pleasant. He wished me well in future.

Lessons to be Learned

162. There was a proposal sent to Gordonstoun recently to set up a trust within the school itself, held by an independent party to provide help and support for victims of abuse. So they have somewhere to go. Current pupils would be aware of it. Someone like me could call up that trust even if it's just for someone to speak to for some counselling. It would be a point of contact with some real funding behind it.
163. It was proposed by a friend of mine, Johnny Findlay. He's involved with the Inquiry. As an individual he has written a letter to Lisa Kerr, the Principal, with his suggestion. It would benefit current and future victims of abuse as well as giving past victims the opportunity to come forward and get help. He has not yet received a response from Gordonstoun. I just don't think they are aware of the extent of the issues of bullying in the school below the organised structures of staff at Gordonstoun.
164. I hope they actively look for signs of these things rather than letting it run under the surface and not acknowledging its existence. In a boarding school I think you can't put enough oversight on staff to stop it from happening. There are too many opportunities in a boarding school when pupils and staff are together on an individual basis. Instead they need to make it easier for people to come forward and say I've had this

experience and reduce as many of the barriers as possible so people can come forward. They need to actively listen to people who have come forward and act on reports.

165. This doesn't affect me as I didn't come forward until many years later when I realised my experience affected more than just me. Had they listened to other people's accounts when they came forward, instead of brushing it under the carpet and having a word with the teacher or, as they've admitted to doing, giving the teacher a good reference so they can get him off their books and pass him onto another school. I know this through other people who have been at Gordonstoun. There have been teachers who have left Aberlour and Gordonstoun, which are the same school as far as I am concerned. I know of one teacher who was given a positive reference so they could go on to teach elsewhere. If they'd listened to the other people's accounts, I wouldn't be in this position. Had they listened they would have been alerted to what that teacher was doing and they would have been able to take steps to prevent that from happening again or keeping a closer eye on that teacher.
166. There should be education at school on what behaviour is wrong. When the abuse happened to me I didn't know how wrong it was. It was only when I was in court did anyone tell me that what happened to me was wrong and it wasn't my fault. No one had ever said that to me. I still thought I had done something wrong and in some way I'd caused it to happen. I needed some sort of education to let me know what behaviour at school is unacceptable and wrong.

Hopes for the Inquiry

167. I hope the inquiry gives anyone who has suffered abuse at school the power and strength to actually come forward and speak about it. Until they do, it's just something they are carrying with them. At some point I hope they take that weight off their shoulders by talking about it. There is still a long process after that when they hopefully can get some help to deal with it. If the Inquiry gives people the power to acknowledge

they've been a victim it might help them to improve their quality of life and start to address old wounds and help them to become better people.

168. I'm not into the idea of making people pay for their mistakes, and I'm pursuing my civil case because I simply cannot fund the therapy that I need. In the meantime my therapy is to try to forget that it happened, but that becomes harder all the time especially when I know there is something out there that can potentially help.

Other information

169. I made a visit to Gordonstoun once since I'd left. I drove through the estate with my former partner. My parents still lived in the area. They have a house very close to the school. Driving through it felt like an abstract, third person experience. It caused a strange whirlpool of emotions.
170. 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.....

DocuSigned by:
FFG
8E635F5EE77F9B1

Dated.....

08 September 2021