

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BLL

Support person present: No

1. My name is BLL. The surname BLL was my married name and I haven't used it for some years since I was divorced. Most of the time I use the family surname of BLL. My surname at birth was BLL. My date of birth is 1974. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going to boarding school

2. I was born in Malta which was where my dad was stationed and I spent only a few months there before we returned to Scotland. I then grew up in Nairn, a small seaside town not far from Inverness. I am an only child. My dad was called and he was in the RAF. My mum, who is called was a nurse and then later on a midwife.
3. I went to Rosebank Primary School in the local town. The secondary school in the town didn't have a good reputation, both academically and socially, and I was a very bright child. With my dad being in the forces the air force would pay towards the boarding fees so if the parent is moved about the child would still have a continuity of education. When I was aged nine it was decided I would attend Aberlour School with help from a RAF bursary.
4. I was the first and only person in my wider family to go to a fee paying school. I was aware at the time that my parents were paying some of the fees for me to be at the school and I don't think I ever really thought about it. My parents didn't have any

understanding or experience of boarding schools. My mum and dad fought a lot, and as an only child I had no one to share those issues with. I had read books about children at boarding schools and it sounded like fun and an exciting adventure and I was happy to go there.

5. Before I started at the school I must have gone to visit. I remember sitting in the headmaster's office and doing a load of written tests. You didn't get to go in the head's office very often so I remember that.

Aberlour School, Aberlour, Moray

6. The school was in a big, beautiful stone house in a remote setting in a tiny village. It has a huge set of steps. There are playing fields in the front. In the hallway, in the foyer area, the floor was black and white tiled floor and it had a big, central staircase sweeping up. There were other buildings. Classes were not in the main building. There was an old stable block at the back that had been converted into classrooms. There were also several pre-fabs out the back of the main building and they were used for lessons. There was also a separate stone building called The Octagon that was just a room. I don't know what it would have been originally. A new covered corridor was constructed that linked the main building to the music department at the back.
7. There were both boys and girls at Aberlour School and there was perhaps two hundred pupils. The kids in the school were aged from six years old to twelve or thirteen. At that age you would be expected to take the Common Entrance Exam before usually going on to Gordonstoun. The headmaster at the time was Sir Toby Coghill who would have been in his mid-fifties or early sixties. He lived in his own house in the grounds and he was around a lot. I liked him and his wife. They were good people and approachable and jolly.
8. The ethos of the school came from Kurt Hahn. Aberlour was officially the prep school for Gordonstoun and the system was built on the Hahnian ideology. When you read about his ideology you might think it sounded amazing, but back then you had to be

seen to be outside a lot doing physically hard things and outward bound activities. There was also a sense of community and working together as a team.

9. There was a lot of status attached to going to both schools. I was teased for being local and having a Scottish accent when I was first at Aberlour. I was told by other pupils that I was from the gutter quite a few times, because I was from Nairn. I had the shit kicked out of me, metaphorically, from the day I started.
10. I don't remember there being any physical bullying. A couple of boys were nasty. One boy who was Greek told me I came from the gutter because I was local. I had more acceptance from the girls to start with, I did have friends, and probably more within the music community. My surname of **BLL** didn't help me as it could be used to rhyme with other words. I changed it by Deed Poll to **BLL** when I was twenty-six.
11. The teachers must have heard and seen it happening, but I don't remember any teachers getting involved. The only teacher who mentioned that sort of thing was at Gordonstoun and he was **OKX**. This would have been in 1989 or 1990. He was reading a lesson when we were studying for **OKX**. He talked to the group about character assassination and it was bullying that he really meant. It felt like he was referring to someone specifically, but he didn't mention anyone.
12. We were all housed in one building. I have a memory of one side of the school having dorms for boys and the other being dorms for girls. I think the boys were on the north side and their rooms got no sunlight. It was very cold in winter and we had to sleep with windows open all year. We had glasses of water by our beds and we had competitions to see if the water froze overnight. The boys always had the most frozen water. It was considered good for our health and well-being to sleep with the windows open.
13. The kids were split up into houses, but not in separate buildings, for competitions. The houses were named after lochs and mountains. I was in Rinnes and there was a house called Clover. The houses were mixed gender and mixed age groups.

14. In terms of staff, back then, the schools had no way of policing who they brought in. A lot of the time people would get a job in the two schools I went to because they were mates with the headmaster. It was openly discussed that they got their jobs because of this connection. It wasn't a secret.

Routine at Aberlour School

First day

15. On my first day both of my parents dropped me off at school. I have only snapshots of memories of those first few days. Because of the things that happened to me later and the other experiences I had, I have a terrible memory of certain things and sometimes no memory. Friends talk about things that happened at school and I have no recollection whatsoever of those events.
16. It seemed like a big adventure at the time and I was just nine years old. I don't remember who met me on arrival. I think you just turned up at the school and everyone was milling around. I guess there must have been a matron involved. I remember I walked through the dormitories and saw people's trunks and all their kit.
17. I have no real memory of a school assembly or any conversation about homesickness or how we might deal with bullying or who we could talk to if that happened to us.

Mornings and bedtime

18. I shared a dormitory with other girls, and the dormitory changed either every term or every school year, I'm not sure which. At first I was in a bigger dorm and there were eight of us. I can't remember who was in there, but we were mixed ages. There was a couple of dorms for the younger girls and they were smaller rooms. There was one dorm that was for just four girls. There would be an older girl who was head of the

dormitory. When I was older I was head of my dormitory for two or three younger girls to look after in a smaller room.

19. We were woken early every day for the morning run at 7am. One of the teachers would walk round the whole building ringing a bell. In winter, a lot of us slept in our PE kit so we didn't have to get changed in the morning. Everyone did the morning run, even the six year olds. It happened every day, no matter what the weather was and in snow and rain.
20. After the morning run we'd be back for a shower and to get ready for school and go and eat breakfast. I think we went to an assembly before our lessons began. Then we had a break before more classes and then lunch.
21. At night time, I have no idea of the time we went to bed. You'd have to be ready and in pyjamas and reading and in, or on, your bed by a certain time for a teacher to come round to do 'lights out'. I have one memory of being quite new to the school. I was in the dorm, standing by my bed and about to put my pyjamas on and I was naked. I heard someone say 'Mr so-and-so is coming'. I ran to the bathroom and locked myself in the toilet with no clothes on and hid there for a long time. I was too scared to come out. The other girls left me there in the toilet. I eventually came out of the toilet, but I'm not sure now how it was resolved.
22. There were night time checks because some people would talk incessantly. Any of the members of staff could be on duty at night and this included the teacher who went on to assault me. He lived in the main building. I remember him coming round the dorms to do lights out. There wasn't designated night staff, like a matron and there would be different members of staff doing night duty. The teaching staff didn't just teach, they also did the duties in the dormitories and the living part of the main house.
23. I can remember there were two members of staff with rooms in the house. The man who assaulted me who had a room downstairs and at the back of the building. Another teacher, David Hanson, had one upstairs and in the centre of the main building. He had an office and a bedroom. He didn't live in the school full time, but spent a lot of

time there. I don't know about other teachers and where they lived. I do remember another teacher, Mr Gardner, did lights out, but whether he stayed on site I don't know.

Mealtimes / Food

24. We went down to the dining room for breakfast. It was a massive room. The school would eat together and we sat in accordance with our houses. We were in the same group with long tables and sitting on benches.
25. You had to eat food and if you didn't eat a certain amount you'd get in trouble. I didn't have a problem with that, but remember sitting with younger kids with a plate of food in front of them and tears streaming down their faces. They would be made to sit there until they ate it. I can't remember what the repercussions were if you didn't eat food. The food was alright in my view and there was a only a few things I didn't enjoy. I wasn't made to eat food. The school had kitchen staff and the food might have been brought out to us, I'm not sure now. I went into the kitchen myself only once or twice.

Washing / bathing

26. The bathrooms were open plan and there were a couple of bathrooms for the girls. I can remember only one of them and that was the bigger one in between the two biggest dorms. One of the big dorms was called Findlater and I'm not sure about the other one. There were showerheads along the wall and no cubicles. I don't remember staff monitoring the showers.

Clothing / uniform

27. We had a PE kit of shorts and t-shirt and long socks up to the knee and trainers. The uniform was a grey woollen skirt, navy jumper and a polo shirt and up to the knee, grey woollen socks. They didn't do ties. There was a kilt for the weekend and any events. The uniform came from a shop in Edinburgh.

School

28. We went to different classrooms and teachers for different subjects. Classes were mixed with girls and boys. I was engaged in my schooling and I did well and I was a bright child. I thought the teaching was of a decent standard and there were some dedicated teachers. I studied music and I played the piano from a young age and I'd also done a lot of dance before I came to the school. In most break times or at lunch I'd be in a rehearsal room practising an instrument.
29. After lunch there was a couple more lessons and then sports in the afternoon. In the winter girls would do hockey and boys would do rugby. There was also horse riding as they had their own stables on the school grounds. In the summer there was netball and athletics and cricket. There would be different sports for the boys and girls.
30. I remember some of the teachers. One of my favourites died very recently. He was an English teacher called Neil Gardner. He was great and pastorally a good person. He encouraged me a lot and did a lot for my education. David Hanson was also brilliant as a science teacher. He did a lot of outward bound stuff and one of my favourite expeditions, to Cape Wrath, was with him. I think he taught maths as well as science and pastorally another good person. By pastoral I'm referring to care of children outside of a classroom setting, and socially. They were teachers who were easy to talk to. If there were issues between children such as bullying, those teachers would be good at mediation between children.
31. I remember Mr Hanson and Mr Gardner being supportive and kind at a time when I was finding life difficult. Mr Hanson was a good father-type figure and the sort of person you would want looking after a bunch of kids. Not every teacher would be good at doing that and I don't imagine any of them had any training in that whatsoever. They would be teaching their subject that they may or may not have had a degree in. I can't remember anyone being presented to us as the adult we would go to with personal issues.

32. Mr Wood taught geography and he wrote me a lovely letter when my dad died even though I was several years into secondary school by then. There was also Mr Channing who taught Latin, I think at Aberlour, but it may have been at Gordonstoun. For music there was Mr Treacher who annoyed me with his sexist attitude, but a good teacher. As a girl I wasn't supposed to play and do well at certain instruments. There were one-to-one music teachers. Mr Pekkar taught violin and he was a crazy old man who chain smoked through our lessons. His wife taught the harp. They left the school and it was really sad and the teacher who then taught the violin wasn't as good.
33. I struggle now to think of female teachers. I think there was a female maths teacher, but I can't remember her name. There was a good quality of education and I learned a lot.

Religion

34. I don't remember if we went to chapel on a Sunday or if we sang hymns in assembly. I remember we said grace before mealtimes. I think the school followed Church of Scotland teachings.

Trips / Holidays

35. There were school expeditions in the summer term and it was compulsory in senior years. I repeated my final year because I was too young to go to Gordonstoun although I had passed the exam. I'd been moved up a year at Aberlour. I also recall a school trip to York because it was so far away and I can remember being there. When it came to school holidays I went home to my parents.

Leisure time

36. In the evenings after school there was a lot of music practice for me. My routine was a bit different from other children because of the music. In the evenings we could read in the dorms. Sometimes we watched TV and I remember watching Tops of the Pops

at school. Otherwise, I don't remember the evenings. At weekends there would be sports fixtures and music events.

37. On a Saturday we could go into the village to buy sweets. There was a Walker's biscuit factory just outside the school gates and they would sell broken biscuits at the weekend for ten pence. I certainly have memories of playing outside in the woods and sitting on the lawn listening to music.

Birthdays and Christmas

38. Birthdays were recognised at the school. You could book a table for dinner and have your friends to sit with you. It would be a special table and you could have birthday cake.

Visits

39. There were two weekends a term when we could go home or parents could visit us. There was a letter writing home session on a Saturday. You were allowed a telephone call home at weekends. I had school friends from overseas who came home with me on visiting weekends or they came at half-term. I think I did go home or my parents would come to me when the opportunity was there.

Healthcare

40. There was a matron who did medical stuff and the laundry. There was a matron in the first aid room that I was in once and that's the only time I remember seeing one. I had blood poisoning. I had bitten around my fingernail and I had a red line going up my finger. The matron took my hand and stuck my finger into boiling water to get rid of the infection. It was very painful. I can't remember the name of the matron. We had few different ones. I think one of them was Toby Coghill's wife and I don't think she was medically trained.

41. I went on a school exchange to France and I was very ill when I was away. The teacher on the French side in charge of the exchange said I was faking it and I was lazy, so they wouldn't let me see a doctor. The woman I was living with said I wasn't. I had an awful cough. It turned out I was allergic to cats and to dust. I was staying with a family who were renovating their house and they had cats. I couldn't breathe. I was aged eleven at the time. I developed horrendous vaginal thrush. I had no idea what was going on. I was scared and embarrassed.
42. My mum came over to visit at half-term and saw the state I was in and took me to see a doctor. They said I had asthma. My mum told them I'd never had asthma. She went home to see my dad and my parents arranged for me to be flown to Inverness airport. They picked me up and drove me home and I had a massive asthma attack. I went straight into hospital and I was there for nearly a month. It turned out the lower parts of my lungs had shut down.
43. I was very ill at the time and it affected me for a few years. I was told I was now asthmatic. Over the years I've very rarely needed a Ventolin inhaler. I also went on to develop hay fever, but I don't have it now. I was on Ventolin at school and had to see the matron at school. I don't think they knew what to do with me. I didn't have any asthma attacks in school.

Bed Wetting

44. Some kids did wet the bed at night. One lad wee'd his bed every night. He had a poor home life with a very strict father. There was a plastic sheet on his bed and he was teased endlessly by other kids. I don't remember it happening in my dormitory.

Discipline

45. There was detention and removal of privileges. I think there may have been some form of physical punishment that I didn't experience as I was well behaved. I do have a memory of a few naughty kids who were sent to see the headmaster. It's not a clear memory. I don't know if they were spanked. I didn't see it happening. I'm sure it didn't

happen to the girls and it was just on the boys' side of things. We girls weren't aware of the same things. Given the culture we were in where you didn't show weakness or talk about feelings, if there were any kids who had been hit or beaten they wouldn't have talked about it. I don't remember any clear warnings from the teachers of physical punishments if we stepped out of line.

46. Removal of privileges could mean not being allowed out at weekend or you couldn't get to do fun things. It didn't happen to me. I didn't have detention either.
47. [REDACTED] There wasn't officially a head girl and a head boy, but there was a system called colour bearers and this is a Kurt Hahn thing. You had to earn your colours through being a good citizen, hard work and being well behaved and showing good leadership and organisation. It meant there would be a purple ribbon sewn on your jumper. It was like being a prefect and the head boy/head girl system, but called something different.
48. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I was also made the leader of my house group. There were colour bearers in your house group and in a role of leadership. In assembly you'd sit in your house groups and I had to ensure everyone was sitting quietly and being well behaved. In school competitions I would organise my house.
49. Colour bearers had no powers to punish any other pupils. I think you were obligated to tell teachers on others if behaviour was bad. There would be a colour bearer meeting with the staff every week and you'd bring issues to the meeting.
50. There was the classic, traditional boarding school bullshit of junior kids being made to run errands for older kids. It was worse for the boys than the girls judging from stories I heard. If you didn't fit in for any reason you got picked on or excluded from friendship groups. Girls were more insidious and cunning and it's all to do with social standing and friendship groups. I don't remember a fagging system for the girls. With boys it

was much more physical and power orientated. Junior boys were treated as slaves and errand boys for the older boys.

51. I don't remember how involved the school was in that and if they turned a blind eye. In Aberlour it was a small school and we were all in one building, but in Gordonstoun it was different as the school was spread out over large grounds and there were loads more kids in six or seven boarding houses. People could get away with a lot more there than they could in Aberlour.

Abuse at Aberlour School

52. My abuser was called ^{DKX} [REDACTED] He was a [REDACTED] and was in the school because he was a family friend of the headmaster and everyone knew that. He was aged nineteen or twenty when he came to the school from [REDACTED] It was a status thing having a [REDACTED] at the school. For some reason he also took [REDACTED] classes.
53. He wasn't at the school when I started there at age nine and he joined later and had been there a few months or a year before we went on the expedition. I remember in an [REDACTED] class he made us stand in The Octagon that was a one room classroom. We had to all stand up with our arms outstretched in front of us and then our hands had to be turned down towards the floor. We had to stand like this with our wrists down for about ten minutes because he thought it was funny. That's the only memory I have of him taking an [REDACTED] class. The school had no-one to teach [REDACTED] and they chose him because there was no-one else. There wasn't a [REDACTED] environment at the school. I suppose they had to meet a curriculum need.
54. ^{DKX} [REDACTED] led an expedition of a group of around ten or twelve children that I went on. I always thought I was aged twelve when I went on this expedition, but my lawyer has told me that I was thirteen. The expedition was to the middle of nowhere. My lawyer and the police have told me we were near to Loch Maree and I have seen a photograph of a loch. On the expedition it was just him as the leader and the only

adult on the trip with a mixed group of boys and girls for seven days and nights. We were sleeping in tents and hiking and we were completely off-grid.

55. All the children went on expedition in their senior year and this was my third one as I had repeated my final year. In the weeks leading up to expedition you'd chose from one, two, three choices of expedition. I'd already done the two I really wanted to do. I don't remember if I put his expedition first on my list. The kids all thought he was cool and he was young and different from other teachers and we thought his expedition would be fun.
56. There are some things I remember and some things I know because the police told me from statements they've taken from other people who were there. Other people have said he told everyone to not bring swimming costumes because they would take up too much space in our bags. We did go swimming. I don't really remember it. There was skinny dipping and I don't know if I did it and I might have sat it out. It was discussed by other people in their statements.
57. We spent the first night lochside and we got our stuff out of the minibus. He said we were a tent short and this meant somebody would have to sleep with him in his tent every night and we would rotate, so it wouldn't be the same person or people. Everyone else had a tent for two or three people. On the first night me and two other girls called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were to sleep with him in his tent that night. After dinner time, he gave us rum in our coffee and I remember that and so do the others.
58. In the tent during the night he starting touching me, I was asleep, and he stroked my back. I woke up and I pretended to still be asleep. I was freaking out, scared and not knowing what was going on. The two other girls got up and left, because they knew he was touching me, and went to sleep with the others. He turned me round and tried to kiss me and undressed my lower half and then raped me. I just remember it being painful and he used a condom. He'd brought condoms on a camping trip with children. I remember being frozen and not knowing what to do and mentally shut down. He tried to make me sit on top of him, but I physically couldn't move. I don't really remember how it ended but I think I'd just gone to sleep. I don't remember what happened after.

59. The next day no-one would speak to me. We were on a long walk the next day. I split off from the group and spent a couple of hours on my own and was really confused. I walked to the top of a ridge with a steep face and I considered chucking myself off it and did nearly fall off, and panicked. I made my way back to the group where they'd set up camp. No-one else spoke to me for the rest of the six days of the trip and I didn't speak to anyone.
60. I remember we reached a point where there was a village nearby. A boy, [REDACTED] in the group needed to call home and [REDACTED] DKX decided he needed to take this boy to the village. One of the girls who was in the tent, [REDACTED] went with them. The lad in that group gave a detailed statement to the police about what happened that day and that [REDACTED] DKX took them to a pub to use the phone and bought them alcoholic drinks. He also told the police that [REDACTED] DKX and [REDACTED] were in some sort of relationship. It turned out [REDACTED] was the girl the same teacher was grooming and abusing within the school itself.
61. [REDACTED] gave a statement to the police in 2013 to corroborate my story. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] She considered she was in a relationship with him at that time. I didn't know when we were in school that she was in that situation with him. I understand she's had a terrible life since. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I think there something like Stockholm Syndrome to this type of abuse.
62. [REDACTED] orchestrated the bullying when we were back at school. She was jealous. That night on the camping trip she left the tent and she knew what was going on. She'd then spoken to the other kids. They all knew. We were in tents and they all heard it, there was noise. For the next six nights I assume there would have been other children in his tent overnight, I don't remember. I know I didn't sleep with him again in his tent.
63. She sent me a message through the police around the time of the investigation to apologise for what she'd put me through. When we were older she once said to me

that we had something in common, I asked her what that was as I couldn't think of anything. Then someone else came into the room and the conversation ended. Many years later I was at a wedding in Scotland. Another girl from school said she'd seen [REDACTED] and she had changed her name and she wanted to talk to me. This was before the police investigation [REDACTED] I've never been able to get in touch with her and I don't even know what her name is now. The police found her difficult to find as she's changed her name three times.

64. After the expedition I was at Aberlour School for another few months. He would corner me in school and say 'you will die before me'. He said it several times. I have no idea what it meant. I don't know if it was his way of intimidating me so I wouldn't tell anyone. After I left the school he continued to work there when I was at Gordonstoun and I saw him at Gordonstoun a couple of times with groups of kids from Aberlour. After that I think he went into the army.
65. I found a photograph of me recently that was taken at a ball, a 50th anniversary ball, and I'm with my dad in the photo and there is a photo of me alone that my dad must have taken. He was so proud of me and he looked so happy and I looked terrible. We were standing together on the steps of the school. I found the photos just the other day. I'm in a ball gown with my hair up and smiling, but my eyes are just dead. I hadn't even remembered what I looked like. I do remember at the ball I was so scared of seeing [REDACTED] there and I didn't want to go.
66. I thought of all the years I didn't tell anyone because I thought I'd made it happen and it was my fault. Now I see these photographs and I see a child. I didn't tell anyone about what happened to me until my daughter was twelve and it was the realisation of looking at a twelve year old child that made me realise I had been a child and so young.
67. The bullying from the other girls, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and a third girl called [REDACTED] started immediately we got back to school. All of them were on the trip. One of them, [REDACTED] has been in touch recently. She gave a statement to the police in 2013. She has also been very helpful and has spoken to my lawyer in the last few months. At the time they

would make up songs about me and him. I don't know how much everyone else, including teachers, saw and heard of that.

Leaving Aberlour School

68. I don't know if any of my teachers from Aberlour noticed a change in my demeanour or should have. The difficulty was that there was only a few months left of prep school and my behaviour could have been put down to being a teenager.
69. In the summer after the expedition Aberlour had this historical medieval day with costumes and we hiked and then we cooked outdoors at a castle. I remember being there and seeing in a corridor, at Aberlour, Mr Gardiner, one of my favourite teachers, talking to DKX and being jovial and buddyish. I remember being pissed off at that.
70. That summer I went on holiday with my mum to Skye and I was moody all holiday because of what had happened. She got cross and complained I ruined her holiday. Then I was seen as being a moody teenager. She's horrified now that she knows what had happened.

Gordonstoun School, Moray

71. I went to Gordonstoun for a visit before I started and we'd been there as a school from Aberlour for musical events.
72. I was in Hopeman House. It was central in the school grounds. I can't remember the names of all the houses, but Hopeman and Plewlands were for girls. For the boys there was Duffus, Round Square, Cumming House and Altyre House. There was also the main Gordonstoun House in the centre which was a big stone house. Off to one side of the main house was the building called the Round Square which is a circular

building and was a boys' boarding house. There were newer classrooms behind there and some old stable block type buildings.

73. There's a long sweeping driveway that goes all the way through the grounds with the buildings off it. There was a road off to the west and two boarding houses. There was a sports complex, a swimming pool, a fire station and more boarding houses. In the opposite direction, towards Duffus, was the chapel and my boarding house. There was a lot of music rooms in the chapel building. There was an old Kirk in the woods and we went there sometimes. There was a lot of woodland in the grounds and a lot of magic mushrooms growing in the woods.
74. The head master at the start of my time was Michael Mavor. He then retired. Then Mark Pyper took over.
75. In Hopeman House I slept in a dorm room with other girls where our own areas were separated into what we called horseboxes. You'd basically have your own room but with half-partitions, they didn't go up to the ceiling and we could see over them into the next persons area. I had my own separate bit and, I think, we had our own windows, and my own bed, desk and cupboard in a small space. There was four beds on one side of the room and one at the end and four beds on the other side of the room. The one bed at the end of the room was slightly bigger and that would always be given to an older girl. There was one row on one side of a corridor and one row on the other side of the corridor. There was maybe three floors in the house and two wings of the building. There was perhaps fifty girls in the house of mixed ages, from thirteen to eighteen. The girl who was head of house got her own little apartment upstairs in the house.
76. The housemistresses who were in charge of the boarding houses started out with a stern approach and don't mess with me. Mrs Clutton was the first house mistress I had at Hopeman House and she was lovely, but only when she had to be and otherwise she was a stern figure of authority. Her role as house mistress would be to make sure were all in the boarding house and not wandering around at night and sat at desks

doing work on our prep in the evening as well as to iron out any logistical issues. At the start of term there would be a whole house meeting and they'd talk to you.

77. I'm not sure if Mrs Clutton was also a teacher and she may have done something like Home Economics. I don't think the second house mistress who replaced her taught a subject and she was a pastoral figure. Her name was Cate Young. I don't remember if the assistant house mistresses had much of a role in the boarding house to help run it. I think being an assistant house mistress was a bit of a side job to being a teacher. We had one who was a history teacher. I think the main house mistresses were just house mistresses and were not teachers. There was an apartment, like living quarters, that they had attached to the house. You could go and knock on her door and or maybe make an appointment to see her.
78. There wasn't an initiation ceremony when I arrived at the start of the school year. It didn't happen with the girls in our house. I'm pretty sure there would have been that sort thing happening with the boys. I've heard the odd story over the years.
79. You were allowed to visit the common room of another boarding house with the permission of a member of staff and you had to sign in. You weren't allowed to go into the bedrooms. I think you could go into the bedrooms if you were girl and the house was for girls, but a boy couldn't go into a bedroom in a girls' boarding house.
80. You could have your own hi-fi or your own music. I always had my own music. I was the only person with a record player and actual vinyl records. I went home for the weekend, which I did sometimes as it was allowed and my mum lived nearby, and returned on the Sunday night to find that someone had had a party elsewhere in the school and persuaded two of the girls to come in the house to get my stuff. The party was in the main Gordonstoun House and I went in there and my records were all over the floor. I was so angry. There was no way to lock away your personal possessions. We had two trunks each and I suppose you could put your stuff in them and padlock them

81. Prefects were chosen for each boarding house. There was also a head boy and head girl for the whole school. I can't remember who they were. There was also a head of boarding house.

Routine at Gordonstoun

82. The routine was very similar to Aberlour. There was still the morning run, but on a bigger scale as everything was so spread out. There was the outdoor activity ethos of Kurt Hahn. In your junior years you learned seamanship on a boat in the nearby harbour. In your senior years you have to spend a week sailing on the school yacht. You are part of the crew. Instead of the morning run you have to jump in the sea every morning and swim round the boat before getting back in. In the school there was never a cuddly moment and no space to not be feeling ok. Very much a stiff upper lip and you don't show weakness.

Schooling

83. In terms of schooling the standard of education was mixed. There were some great teachers and some shit teachers who were there because they knew the head master. One of my English A' Level teachers was a retired policeman and he'd become an English teacher. He was a friend of Mark Pyper who gave him a job teaching English. I can't recall his name as I skipped his classes as they were so shit. I'd study by myself. The other English teacher was good and she knew what she was doing and was clearly a qualified teacher. With science, the teacher was clearly a genius who knew a lot about science, but couldn't teach children. It's another skill.
84. There was no guidance teacher at Gordonstoun. There was no focussed pastoral support. There was a system of tutors and I had a weekly tutor meeting. I had a woman who was very nice, I can't remember her name, she was an art or music teacher and maybe that was her role.

Relationships with other pupils

85. Drinking alcohol would have started for me at the age of thirteen or fourteen. Alcohol would be smuggled in at the start of term and later on, as I lived fairly nearby, and had friends outside of school, I could organise drop offs. My parents had a static caravan at Lossiemouth. We went there when it was empty and get someone from outside school to meet us with drinks for a party in the caravan.
86. I remember us getting drunk in the bath. The housemistress never went into the bathrooms and we knew that. Girls would smoke in there by the vent, although I didn't smoke. At weekends we would drink in the bathroom and then wander round the school while drunk.

Healthcare

87. I had no physical health issues at Gordonstoun. We were all generally fit and healthy because of all the sport and outdoor activity we did. There were very few overweight pupils and if there were they arrived in the school in the sixth form.
88. I broke my nose playing hockey in a match with another school. A girl from a visiting team missed the ball and hit me in the face. We all had BUPA private healthcare and I was whisked off to Aberdeen for surgery. I was there for a couple of days and then back at school with a sticky brace over my nose. I was aged fourteen so it was awful and I was nervous of playing hockey for a while after that.

Leisure time

89. We had freedom at weekends depending on how far you wanted to walk. It's by the coast and in the countryside. The school is just outside a tiny village called Duffus. It takes one hour to get to the beach. There was probably a curfew time to be back at school. I guess the housemistress would start looking for us at a certain time.

Trips and holidays

90. There were school trips overseas. As well as building a school in Kenya I went on a school trip to Russia. I was feeling really miserable throughout the trip. It was in my final year at school and after the death of my dad. I feel sorry for my friends now as they wanted to be happy and I was so miserable. As well as trips overseas there were expeditions at the school.

Running away

91. People ran away from school. I can't remember who. One went all the way home to the Netherlands. I don't know what happened as result of that or if that person was disciplined.

Inspections

92. I have no memory of the school being inspecting for its education or living conditions. There wasn't any complaints procedure that I was aware of.

Discipline

93. It became more clear in recent years, since people have started talking about their experiences, that there was so much that went on that that the majority of us had no clue about. Especially in the boys' lives. I was not disciplined for anything. I wasn't aware of any physical punishments taking place. I have heard stories since leaving school, but I can't say exactly. Some of my friends sailed through school and had no idea of anything horrible happening to anyone. They had the best time of their life at that school and had no problems. It's fascinating to hear now as an adult about the different experiences people had at school.
94. I heard of kids being suspended or expelled from school. I saw a lot of girls in our house smoking in the bathrooms and there was a lot of drinking going on. There was one lad who used to smuggle in marijuana and he ended up being expelled. There

was another lad who took too many of the magic mushrooms from the woods and I think he had to leave the school.

95. I never liked being at Gordonstoun. There were moments of fun with people who were nice. I wanted to leave for a long time. When mum was abroad I asked my dad if I could go somewhere else. Dad looked into Inverness Royal Academy, but I didn't end up going and I think it was his death that stopped it happening.

Events in 1990 and afterwards

96. My dad passed away in 1990 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] My mum had been working abroad since I was aged thirteen and she was working in the Middle East when my dad died. I was sixteen when he died. I was the closest to him and he was my favourite parent and my relationship with my mum was quite stressful. There was an odd mixture of things going on at the time and while it was an awful experience, it also meant that the girls who bullied me at school stopped doing it. It was a relief when they left me alone.
97. The school told me about my dad. I was in the main Gordonstoun House and someone came bursting into the room and told me I needed to go to Hopeman to see Mrs Clutton, the house mistress at that time, immediately. I had a sense that something really bad had happened.
98. My dad was in the RAF and the Lossiemouth runway was at the end of the playing fields. I knew he was on a flight that day and I'd seen his plane take off. I sprinted to the boarding house and I went to her office and she was sat there crying and she told me he had died [REDACTED] He'd always flown and I flew in the Air Training Corps and I'd never worried about it. I'd had a couple of dreams about him dying in situations with aeroplanes and in the dream I'm running and not getting anywhere. He used to fly Nimrods and then changed to Shackleton aircraft and they were much older and maybe that was what made me anxious.

99. Gordonstoun didn't deal with it. I ran away from school and went to stay with some young colleagues of my dad's for two days after it happened. I was alone in their house for a couple of days while they went to work. My mum was working in the Middle East at the time and it took her a couple of days to get home. No-one knew where I was. My aunt eventually found me and I don't know how. She took me away and think I went home to Nairn until my mum arrived.
100. The thing that stands out for me from those couple of days was being alone in someone's house and they didn't know what to do with me. I just had a bag with a few things in it. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Then there was the funeral.
101. There were no repercussions from having disappeared for two days. I think they were just concerned and no-one was angry with me. When I got back to school Angela Clutton had retired and been replaced by another woman, Cate Young, who was a friend of Mark Pyper. She shouldn't have been in that job and she was the last person who should be looking after a bunch of teenage girls and she hated us. She ended up leaving after having a breakdown and that encapsulated it for me. There were so many people on staff, in both schools, who shouldn't have been there.
102. My dad was killed two weeks before my GCSE exams were due to start and I was back at school within a fortnight and in time for my exams. The school told my mum they were anticipating I would fail them. I should have got better grades, but I still took my exams and got As and Bs rather than all A grades. I was expected to have a stiff upper lip and carry on. I remember being in the exam hall and hearing an aircraft going over the school and everyone staring at me.
103. There weren't any conversations about my dad at the school or about my well-being. Mrs Clutton was still the house mistress when he died, and she was good, but then she left. She cared about us. She'd made it clear to me that her door was always open. I think part of her role was to be the person to go to with personal issues. I don't know if we were aware of that. The house mistress had a lot of teenage girls to be in charge of in the house.

104. One of the assistant boarding house mistresses in my house said to me, that I should be head of house. I was never in trouble and never caught smoking, but I never got a position of responsibility. I found out much later on that this was because my dad died and I was sad. The second housemistress, Cate Young, was horrible to me. She told me once we're not giving you any special treatment because your father died.
105. I remember I was in tears in the school chapel when it was Remembrance Day that year. I ran out of the chapel and into the woods. I remember two teachers chased after me.
106. I took an [REDACTED] when I was in school. My friend [REDACTED] told the housemistress after she'd come to see me in my room and she knew I was very upset that day. I didn't want to die, I just wanted to feel better. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I told my friend [REDACTED] not to worry [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] She told the housemistress anyway, in the morning. I'd slept through the night by then. The next day I was taken into hospital in Elgin. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
107. I was in the hospital in Elgin for a few days. Two teachers from the school came to see me. One of them was Ben Goss who had his own kids in the school. He was a lovely man. Mr Lofthouse also came to see me. He was also really lovely. He was running a school production that I was in. My mum was notified about it. I don't remember where my mum was at the time and if she visited.
108. The school threatened to kick me out unless I went to appointments with a psychiatrist that they gave me. There was a letter. I don't know who wrote it, but it was written to my mum. I saw him for a few weeks in a hospital in Elgin. I think I told him what I thought he wanted to hear just so he would let me out of that situation. I was aged seventeen when I saw him. I think he was called Chris Perrera. I disclosed the rape to

him and he wrote it in a report that he sent to the school. I only found this out three years ago. The school never spoke to me or anyone else about it. The police found the documentation in the school premises when they searched it as part of their investigation.

109. A few months later, my mum also tried to take her own life. She left me a note. I came home and found her. I may already have been living at home by this time. My memory of that time period is quite muddled in my head. I went with her to hospital in an ambulance. She was taken to the hospital that she worked in and was treated by people that she worked with.
110. At some point in my last year I decided to live at home and I was a day pupil. I'd passed my driving test and my mum's house wasn't far from Gordonstoun. I had a little study room in the boarding house to use. It was after my experience of the second housemistress who shouldn't have the care of children. After my mum tried to take her own life she didn't want me to go home to see my mum and this housemistress said she didn't believe I was going to see my mum and I was really seeing some boyfriend.

Abuse at Gordonstoun

111. The boys' house called Duffus was quite remote. One of the house masters from there is now in prison for abusing boys and he is called Andrew Keir. He was my physics teacher and he told me I was no good at physics and shouldn't study it at A' Level. He didn't like girls. I heard no rumours about him at school, but I didn't quite like his vibe. I know that some people can be scientists and odd and quirky. If I could put money on anyone to be an abuser, for me, it would be him. I never heard anything about Keir at the time, but boys don't talk about these things.
112. I have a friend who was in his boarding house. When Keir was being tried, this guy I knew gave evidence to support him and travelled from abroad to do it. This guy, my friend [REDACTED] was a product of that process. On the Alex Renton TV documentary, there was a guy at the end, who talked about a tradition of paedophilia being passed down.

That's what I see when I look at my friend [REDACTED] When my son was young [REDACTED] bought him a pair of lederhosen, tiny leather shorts. He wanted my six year old son to put them on and to take a photograph. At the time I was so uncomfortable. This was way before the Keir thing happened. [REDACTED] is odd and very clever and I think is on the spectrum. I decided we couldn't be friends anymore.

113. Another man, Kevin Lomas, came into the school and I can't remember what he taught, but he wasn't one of my teachers. He was attached to the Round Square house as assistant house master. I went on a school trip to Kenya on a Round Square international trip and he was one of the teachers who went. We went to build a school there.
114. From the minute he arrived at school there were rumours about him coming to Gordonstoun because he'd been kicked out of a teaching job in England for being caught masturbating in front of kids in his boarding house or in a changing room. The rumours were rife and they went on for years.
115. We had a leavers ball right at the end of my time in Gordonstoun in 1992 and he tried to put his tongue in my mouth and my friend said the same thing. He'd gone round the leavers ball trying to snog a load of girls. I can't recall the subject he taught. He came to the school in my last couple of years. He wasn't old, maybe in his early thirties. I don't know if anyone from teaching saw him behaving like that at the ball. We only ended up discussing his behaviour after we'd left school. There were rumours all through the school, but just about his old school in England. I didn't hear anything about him when I was at Gordonstoun.
116. The problem for me was the bullying generally and being with people didn't leave me alone for what had happened at Aberlour. At Gordonstoun the bullying from the three girls [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] was much worse. It was a bigger place and we weren't all living in the same building. They could get away with a lot more. There were some nice girls in my house, but they found it difficult to be associated with me. It was good for me that I did music as an escape.

117. The bullying was harder to detect because of the larger numbers. Those three girls from Aberlour spread rumours further in the school. It's been interesting in the last few years, since the police investigation, that quite a few people from school have been in touch with me to say we all heard the story and the rumours and we're so sorry you went through it. Everybody knew. I still get the odd message through social media. There were some lovely people who were in Gordonstoun and weren't at Aberlour.

Reporting of Abuse at Gordonstoun

118. In my memory, my first proper disclosure, in my first year at Gordonstoun, was to a girl called [REDACTED] in school a year above me. I knew her from my boarding house and from music. I remember we were in the drying room/laundry room for our boarding house. I remember her doing a nervous laugh in response. The police asked her about our conversation and she doesn't remember me telling her. In my first year at Gordonstoun I must have told my immediate friendship group, at some point and probably when we were drunk. We did a lot of that.

Leaving Gordonstoun

119. I left the school in 1992 after taking my A' levels that year in Biology, English literature and Chemistry and got B, B and E grades respectively in my exams. I wasn't focused at the time and it was a miracle I got anything at all. The school did offer some careers advice in that they offered tests you could do to determine what sort of career might suit you. They also did MENSA testing. I know I did well in the MENSA test. I wanted to be a vet, but the physics teacher had told me I couldn't do the subject at A' level because I wasn't good enough at it. I enjoyed science subjects.
120. I wanted to join the air force and I was [REDACTED] at Gordonstoun. I'd also learned how to fly a glider and loved it. Wanting to join the RAF was driven by the loss of my father and a desire to stay close to him. I realised in the end that it wasn't healthy for me. I was offered a scholarship to join the air force and university

sponsorship at the age of sixteen and again at nineteen. I tested twice because I didn't grow tall enough.

Life after being in boarding school

121. I went on to the University of Edinburgh to study Biochemistry. I wasn't focussed and too much had happened to me and I didn't really want a Biochemistry degree as I thought I'd join the air force and a Biochemistry degree wasn't necessary. But then I didn't grow enough to go onto flight training and the air force was strict about physical dimensions. I'd passed everything else I needed to pass to become a navigator. I didn't know what to do with myself after that.
122. I left university after one year and joined a band and worked as a waitress and did music. Then I went home and got a job working with horses over winter. Then I moved south to go to equestrian college and became a horse riding instructor. I never went back to live in Scotland. I did British Horse Society training. Then I gave it up when I hurt my back and I moved to London and worked in office jobs for five years.
123. After that I got a place at Dartington College of Arts in Devon, but didn't take it up and instead moved to Brighton on a whim and met my husband. We now have two adult children, a girl of twenty and a boy of eighteen. Then I went back to university to study music when the kids were small and got a foundation degree before getting a teaching job and I've been teaching singing ever since. I was married for fifteen years before getting divorced.
124. My mum now lives near to me and my children. She moved to the area when my youngest child was a baby. My relationship with my mum is better now. My son [REDACTED] is now aged eighteen. He was born with a heart condition. At the age of two days he was transported through London in an outreach ambulance to have an operation elsewhere. On the journey the ambulance crashed with a police car. He was pulled out of the wreckage of the crash in front of me and my husband. [REDACTED] heart stopped and he had a depressed skull fracture and he was clinically dead.

125. It's a miracle he is alive. He had been sedated and was covered in patches for the machines that held various cannulas and drips in place and these were all ripped off in the collision apart from one tiny cannula in a vein in his ankle. As his heart had stopped all the surface blood vessels had disappeared so there was nowhere to get adrenaline in him to get his heart re-started, but because this one cannula had stayed in his vein they managed to get adrenaline in him. Without that he would not have survived. Then he had to wait a fortnight for a heart operation because of the depressed skull fracture, which was ultimately successful. It was touch and go for a while. He is now a fit and well young man who is very clever and able and shortly heading to university.
126. The defence team in my civil legal case, against Gordonstoun, say that the trauma I have experienced in my life is due to what happened to my baby and the death of my father, and not because I was raped as a child. I spoke with the psychiatrist for the defence team recently. I have given further details of this case later in the statement under the heading 'Reporting of Abuse'.
127. I have a group of friends from my boarding house in Gordonstoun that I keep in touch with and they're lovely. We don't get to see each other very often now and sometimes when I'm with them they'll talk about something from school and I have absolutely no memory of an event or a person and they all remember it and I was there at the time.

Impact

128. I can't take medication and I have tried it over the years. It doesn't work for me and makes me exhausted and unproductive. Keeping myself together for my children has been a massive driving force in my life and now they are both adults I have realised recently that is what I've been working so hard to do. I have developed other ways of coping through exercise and running and that helps me avoid feeling anything else. I think people imagine that to have experienced trauma and suffer PTSD and depression that they have to constantly be an absolute mess and not functional. I

function well on a number of levels. and I've been a good parent. My children know everything about what happened to me and they know I've worked really hard over the years to manage that.

129. I have a recurring dream about Aberlour School and the building itself. Literally in the dream it's the front part of the house and the hallway with the staircase and I'm trapped in a weird situation. Small things take me by surprise. The last time I was in Edinburgh I went to see the legal team and the QC was sitting next to me and he had this folder of documents relating to me. He turned this page and there was a form that my dad had filled out for me to join Aberlour School and it was written in his handwriting and I burst into tears. The lawyer was so apologetic and I had to explain it was ok.
130. I also have flashbacks. Not so much now. I started my legal case nearly ten years ago now and the dreams and flashbacks cluster around my involvement with the lawyer. I tend not to think about it, otherwise as it's so exhausting. Then something crops up or I get an email from the lawyer and it triggers the reaction. I think I've been worse in the last few years than before I'd started talking about it so much and before the police investigation, because I'd done such a good job of burying everything. The dreams cluster and having more awareness now as an adult has in some ways made it worse, being a parent as well and seeing myself in my daughter.
131. I've tried really hard not to let it impact my children and how I brought them up. when she was around twelve or thirteen I let my daughter go on a school trip to Germany. They have to have their own lives, but it made me very nervous. Sometimes I was studying in a different town to the where my young children were in school. That was really hard. One day I was having a bad time and I had to ring the school for reassurance that my son was ok. That is probably more to do with how ill he was as a baby. I wanted them to have independence and their own lives and didn't want them to have a negative experience growing up.
132. There has been a negative impact on my career. I have had no belief and or confidence in myself. I was too traumatised to focus on anything. When I did my music degree I struggled to get it finished and during that time the investigation and legal

case kicked off. I did two years of the three year foundation course and didn't do the third year. Then my marriage fell apart. I had so much going on with my studies, two children and my marriage. I still managed a first class degree. I was on pills for a fairly short period of time and I would sleep for long periods of time. I was weaned off them slowly.

133. I can't maintain a healthy relationship which I would like to be able to do but don't know if I can. It's so difficult, I think about what point in time do I tell a new partner about what happened to me or if I don't tell them at all. If I don't tell them I feel I'm hiding something. There are certain things in a relationship that I can't tolerate. If I tell my partner then the minute I've told them I become that girl again. Since I separated from my husband, he just wanted it all to be over. When there were the issues with the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] he was saying 'that's it finished, it's over. You can move on'. For me it wasn't like that.
134. About three years ago I had a course of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) through the NHS. I wanted to try that as an alternative to medication as I don't like how I am through tablets and the children sense the change in me. It made me realise I have issues with both long term and short term memory. I think it might be a trauma response thing and my brain just dumps memories. The CBT was difficult to fit in my life and I was constantly struggling to fit in the homework I had to do. I also tried a course of talking therapy with some hypnosis and that helped to stop the flashbacks around my son's illness and the accident.
135. After my divorce, I had a two year relationship. I was having CBT at the same time and dealing with a lot and he was so sympathetic and amazing. For a while we had a healthy sex life and then I told him about the assault. Things changed between us and he needed to have some form of control over me and he ended up using my history and trauma to control me. He said I made him feel like a rapist and I thought only about myself and what I'd been through. I had thought I could trust him and I'd worked hard at it, but after that experience, I don't know if I could try another relationship.

136. There was a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder by Dr Nick Cooling, the psychiatrist attached to my legal team. His assessment of me two or three times now has been severe clinical depression and PTSD. The defenders in the civil case argue there is no proof of PTSD from the rape and the PTSD could be caused by my dad's death and the illness of my baby.

Reporting of Abuse

137. I reported the sexual assault to the police in 2011 or 2012. I was added to a Facebook forum by an old school friend. Everyone was talking about their experiences of Gordonstoun. For a while I sat there reading their accounts and I didn't want to talk about it. There was a woman on there, called [CQE] in the group whose job is connected to Police Scotland and she is involved in child protection. She was at Gordonstoun and she's a couple of years older than me. The people on the forum were told that if we disclosed to [CQE] the issue would be taken forward. I thought about it for a while and looked at my daughter and I realised how young I was when I was assaulted and I decided I needed to do it.
138. I disclosed to [CQE] and she took it to the child protection team in Police Scotland. Then an officer called DC Karen Colbran got in touch with me. Then they asked me to speak to an officer near to where I live to give a statement. My interview was videotaped and sent onto Police Scotland. I then had to pick him out of a video line up. It was so bizarre because of the time lapse. I wasn't confident that I would recognise him. Then I saw his face on screen and I had a physical reaction. I really couldn't believe it, on one level I still wasn't sure, but my subconscious knew it was him. I couldn't drive home afterwards as I was physically sick on the side of the road.
139. When the police investigated in 2011/12 they interviewed most of the people who were on the camping trip. it was such a big thing for me as I thought no-one would believe me or take my side or even remember anything. The police told me they spoke to ten different people from that trip.

140.



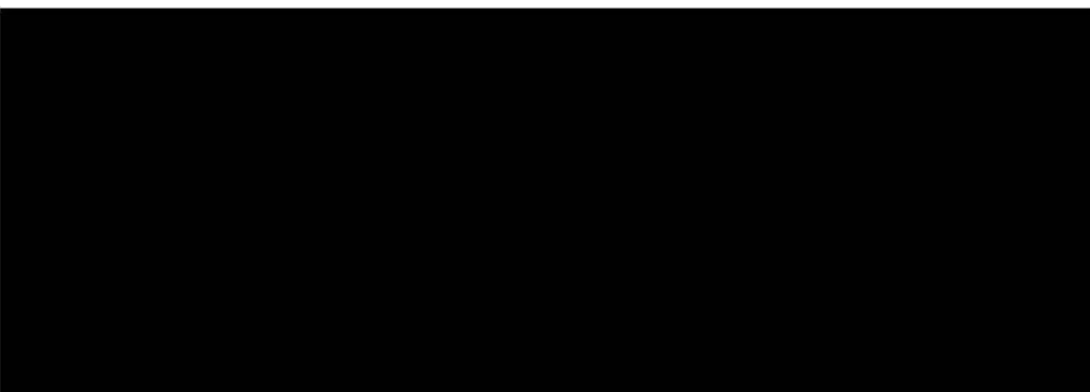
141.



The police told me a bunch of stuff that they had uncovered that I had no idea of. It was mind blowing to me. Aberlour School had moved out of Aberlour House and moved into a newly built house in the grounds of Gordonstoun. They were still functioning as Aberlour House the preparatory school. Eventually they closed Aberlour House. When they moved, their records were destroyed in a fire.

142. When Detective Alan went looking for evidence he was told it had all been destroyed in a fire. However he did spent several weeks looking through boxes of papers in the loft in the main Gordonstoun House. During that period of time he found a single piece of evidence that proved I was at Aberlour House at the same time as ^{DKX} He might have found the psychiatrist's letter in that search which should be in Gordonstoun's records. Otherwise my legal team obtained it through their work. I remember they phoned me two or three years ago to tell me it had been recovered. I couldn't believe that in all these years I didn't know that the school knew. My lawyer has a folder that is full of stuff that they or the police have found.

143.




144. I also started a civil case for compensation around eight years ago. It wasn't something I'd gone looking for. Other people from Gordonstoun, such as the guy called Johnny who was in the Alex Renton article, got in touch with me as a few of them were going with the same legal firm, Drummond Miller, on a Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) claim. That is separate from the civil claim. Then I was told you can't pursue both CICA and civil claim, or at least if you get money through one you can't from the other. I've had days where I think I don't want their money, but I need the money, but I don't want it. I want the justice more than anything else. My case is setting precedent and the money aside, it's an important thing.
145. We had to change legal firms because of a conflict of interest with Gordonstoun. Then I instructed Slater Gordon on a civil claim and that is ongoing. There was a legal debate in October and it was decided in my favour so we could have a proof. Then the defence lodged an appeal. I think it came as a surprise to the defence to know the extent of the evidence my legal team and/or Police Scotland have uncovered. In particular the document that proves the psychiatrist informed the school that I had disclosed a rape.
146. In April 2015 the journalist Alex Renton wrote an article for the Observer entitled 'Rape, child abuse and Prince Charles's former school', about abuse at Gordonstoun. A guy I went to school with called Johnny was pictured at the top of the article. He's a bit younger than me. The article was largely about me and I was referred to as [REDACTED] throughout.
147. There is a paragraph in there about the teacher called Kevin Lomas referred to above that notes during the sixteen years he worked at Gordonstoun he had a reputation for inappropriate sexual activity and he was known for fumbling attempts to kiss girls with his tongue. Kevin Lomas was jailed in 2008 for sexual offences against young girls at a tutoring school he ran in Oxfordshire.

Lessons to be Learned

148. There need to be clear and obvious roles for people who are approachable to children. How can we ensure we have trustworthy adults looking after children in the first place. Even with Disclosure and Barring Service checks, there is only so much you can do. People need to be trained in safeguarding. I've had that for the music teaching. I have over the years myself reported concerns to the appropriate person who's role that is. We do ultimately need to look out for our teenagers and know them well enough that we see changes in behaviour.
149. Teachers wouldn't be allowed now to take a group of children on a trip alone. It is not a thing anymore. When I was teaching in a school, whenever there was a school trip there would be a risk assessment and there had to be a certain ratio of staff to children and various other things.
150. In the last few years Gordonstoun have made a big effort to tell us how different things are now and how much they think of the welfare of their children. I hope that's true. The boarding school culture has traditionally been a terrible environment, certainly in a boys-only environment. Gordonstoun was at least co-educational and perhaps it wasn't so bad. I would never have sent my own children away to school, but friends of mine have and their children had a nice time.

Other information

151. 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.....13 July 2021.....