

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

DPQ

1. My name is DPQ. My date of birth is 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in 1967 and was adopted as a baby. I was sent to board at Clifton Hall School in 1974, aged seven, and gained a minor scholarship to Fettes College in 1980.

Fettes College, Carrington Road, Edinburgh

3. I arrived at Fettes in September 1980, aged thirteen. I endured the full five years there.
4. I was in Glencorse House under a teacher named FTG. There was no comfort. The dormitories were cold and the showers were in a cold stone room. Add to this the strange atmosphere of institutionalised cruelty. I broke my wrist playing rugby when I was fifteen and the school nurse told me that I had to take my boots off before she'd attend to me. I took off my boots one-handed in severe pain. She definitely knew I had a breakage. I can't remember her name. I remember an English teacher, Mr Reeves, once said to me, "You're not supposed to enjoy it here". It was a "witty" comment over a meal.
5. I was constantly tired from lack of privacy and noise at night in dormitories in which there were up to sixteen beds. A boy named used to come into our dormitory late and slam the door. One night someone complained so he turned on the

lights and went round poking us with a broom to properly wake us up. There was no supervision by staff of the dormitory at night. Older pupils were constantly wandering in after lights out. They were not meant to but the place was a shambles under [FTG]

6. I was constantly hungry from lack of food and having no money to buy any more. I can't remember details of what we got for meals. I do remember that all meals seemed to involve chips. Basically the food was poor.
7. I was constantly depressed and quiet.

Abuse

8. I very quickly became aware of a strange atmosphere of literally constant verbal abuse between the pupils. This was known as "mocking". As a tall person, I was given plenty of abuse of this type.
9. In my first week, I was assigned a prefect for whom I was a "fag". This involved cleaning his study, and other tasks. This person later loudly referred to me as a "lazy shit". During my first term at Fettes, I came out of this prefect's study to be confronted by a group of sixth formers. One of them, [REDACTED] told me I was "gorgeous" and groped me aggressively in front of a group of his laughing friends. This involved trying to put his hands inside my trousers and feeling my genitals. [REDACTED] was a pupil in Glencorse House.
10. About an hour later, I was lying in bed in a dormitory and [REDACTED] came in and tried to grope me under the sheets. I remember the detail of his pens falling out of his top pocket as he did this. A teacher named Michael McIntosh-Reid came in as this was happening and didn't say anything. [REDACTED] looked embarrassed and left. He never spoke to me again. I still don't know if McIntosh-Reid had a word with him. These events were never mentioned by anyone who witnessed them. From then on, Fettes became a place to be endured, to defend myself from. I identified hugely with the sixties counterculture – rebelling against a rotten system.

11. There was constant unpredictable bullying. One sixth former, [REDACTED], attacked a fourth former in a queue and said to us, "That's what you'll all get". [REDACTED] was also a pupil in Glencorse House. The fourth former was shaken up. Staff were not told about the attack.
12. One poor child, [REDACTED], was constantly bullied by his peers. I do not know if staff were aware of this. [REDACTED] tried to commit suicide but [REDACTED] – much to his tormentors' delight. One tormentor was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] recently wrote a short story about being bullied.
13. I was picked to do a cross country run aged thirteen, which included running through a freezing pond while the rest of the school stood and laughed. This wasn't a punishment. It was a "sporting event" called the steeplechase. I think it must have been discontinued after 1981. The punishments were the notorious training runs. I couldn't even be bothered finishing the race. I just went back to the house I was in. By the summer of 1981, I had become very withdrawn and stayed away from sports which was something we were all meant to do and I was always relatively good at – more shoving and verbal abuse. For me it was all music now. My home life was grim too. I escaped into music but shudder when I see popular culture from the early eighties.
14. At this time, my closest friend, [REDACTED] was being bullied by an older boy in Carrington House. [REDACTED] complained about this for years. He told me that the boy once made him squat for hours motionless while being verbally abused. In 1981, [REDACTED] walked out and refused to go back. [REDACTED] is now dead.
15. As I got older, the atmosphere seemed marginally less horrible. I skived everything I could and continued to pass exams. In 1985, I reported that two third formers were bullying a contemporary which was dealt with by the new housemaster. Parents were never told or asked about these matters. It was as if we deserved this treatment.

Inspections/visits

16. There was no interest from parents or teachers in our physical or mental welfare. The idea of inspections or visits was unthinkable. Parents visited once a year. Nobody asked us about well-being ever. There was a kind of wild west atmosphere and the teachers seemed indifferent. As a friend of mine said, "Institutional abuse was the status quo".

Impact

17. I have no happy memories of feeling included, loved or appreciated. I was at a very vulnerable age when I went to Fettes and was treated appallingly. Worse still, nobody seemed to care. As an adult I have a loathing of posh accents and am defensive often, though my life in music and my family have been a joy to me.
18. 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..... DPQ

Dated.....

Certificate Of Completion



Record Tracking



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	DPQ	Sent: 9/4/2020 8:39:57 AM
		Viewed: 9/7/2020 9:35:37 AM
		Signed: 9/9/2020 9:22:21 AM

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Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
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Certified Delivered	Security Checked	9/7/2020 9:35:37 AM
Signing Complete	Security Checked	9/9/2020 9:22:21 AM
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