

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Craig Grant ROBERTSON

Support person present: No

1. My name is Craig Grant Robertson. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1980. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I attended Keil School from August 1991 to June 1998 as a day pupil, completing the full seven years possible at the time, having started there as part of the first 'Transitus' class. I followed the Keil School element of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry with horror at the awful sexual abuse of which I only had knowledge from social media some time after the fact. However, I also had a great interest in the wider considerations of the Inquiry as they examined the school and I found myself compelled to submit my evidence as a consequence.

Life before Keil school

3. I was born at the Vale of Leven Hospital in Alexandria and grew up in Dumbarton. My mum is [REDACTED] and my dad was [REDACTED]. I have one sister who is five years younger than me.
4. My father was a lawyer and at first we lived in the east end of Dumbarton. After that we moved to Kirkton Hill about 5 minutes' walk away from Keil School.
5. I attended Knoxland Primary School from Primary One and, until Primary Six, I was entirely a product of the state system. The system of teaching at Knoxland followed a predictable routine which suited me and generally I stuck to the rules, however I was

the oldest in my class and I remember being bored by the teachers trying to make lessons appeal to younger pupils while I was in Primary 5. I remember being much more engaged by a teacher who had a more mature style in Primary 6.

6. A combination of factors then led to me attending Keil, albeit against my wishes at that time. There was no family history of private education, however my father wanted the best education for me and he saw a private education as providing that. My mum was keen that I did not go to Glasgow for primary school and I don't think my parents ever considered boarding school, they had no intention of sending me to live elsewhere. A friend of my dad's had sent his son to Keil and he spoke highly of it, although I do not believe my parents were aware of the school before our move to Kirkton Hill.
7. At the time Keil was an established boarding school which had embraced day pupils and it was marketing itself as providing a high quality academic education. They were creating a Primary 7 class, which they called the Transitus class and which my parents told me they saw as providing a natural fallback plan. They considered that if Keil wasn't right during that Transitus year I could go to Dumbarton Academy for the first year of secondary.
8. To me that meant I would be leaving Knoxland before Primary 7 and entirely leaving my small group of friends, including my one best friend who was to be going to Dumbarton Academy. Consequently, there was some trouble at home between my parents and me. I do believe, though, that the decision about the school was theirs to make and that they made the best decision they could. On balance now, I believe it was a good decision.
9. I attended the Bursary Day during the 1990-1991 academic year when I sat entrance exams and was interviewed alone by one of the teachers, [IPT]. I distinctly remember Mr [IPT] asking why I wanted to attend Keil to which I replied that I did not wish to attend. Although my parents found this inappropriate, such a forthright opinion may well have sealed my acceptance, and I have always considered that to the credit of the school.

10. During the Bursary Day I sat a bursary exam, which consisted of verbal reasoning, English and maths assessments. I don't recall any specific questions, but it was academically robust and much more formal than I had experienced, perhaps more so than I later experienced at Standard Grade. I probably spent about a third of the day in those exams; they were a genuine test of our abilities.
11. I was shown around the school by senior pupils and I remember thinking that the tour was disorganised. My parents were also given a tour, but separate to me. I recall being shown the Mason House boarding accommodation and seeing a poster on the wall of Freddy Krueger. I was a somewhat squeamish eleven year old and I turned away. I recall thinking that I did not know how I would be able to cope if I had to be exposed to that environment.
12. I was not on the assisted places scheme and I was not on one of the life changing bursaries from the trust, generally my parents paid the majority of the fees. I was awarded a small bursary, and when my parents asked why, they were told that the school was impressed by me and wanted me to attend. I have long suspected that almost everyone received a similar small bursary, although I do not know that as fact. I do, however, have some anecdotal supporting evidence and I have never seen any evidence to the contrary.

Keil School, Dumbarton

Layout

13. Keil was located in an attractive mansion house that had been built in the nineteenth century by the Denny shipbuilding family. The original school had been founded in Campbeltown in 1915, but was moved to Dumbarton in 1925 after the original building had burnt down. The school in Dumbarton had been used during the second world war by Norwegian soldiers, who had built a cinema adjoining the original building. That 50 year old wooden building then passed for the gym and was where assemblies were held.

14. The original building had been extended out the back where there was an aesthetically horrendous, but generally functional, 1960's brick-built dining room. A smaller mansion house across the road formed a boarding house, converted stables formed another boarding house and there was another 1960's building in the grounds that was a third boarding house.
15. Although not very often, I was in the boarding houses and they were pretty basic. In the junior boarding house there were rows of beds with some sort of plasterboard partitions to create bays of four beds. It looked like a hospital ward. After a time that house was closed and the boys were merged into the senior houses.
16. There were science labs in what had been the walled garden and an art block was built during my time, both of which were brilliantly modern. Portacabins and other supposedly temporary buildings were used indefinitely, but generally these were functional. Other classes were in the main mansion house building, and held in rooms that were never designed for the purpose but were generally workable and often quite attractive. The main building did have a roof that leaked in extreme weather, and when I asked why it was not fixed, I was told that the cost was prohibitive. Events since then have confirmed to me that the school lived in the moment financially, often benefiting from good will.
17. Someone once told me that there were, I think, forty acres of established gardens, and we had a lot of freedom in the grounds. There was one decent rugby pitch, which converted to a running track in the summer. A second pitch just about fitted, but I once went looking for the far corner and I found it well behind the tree line. The third pitch was set at an extreme angle and was famous in Scottish schools rugby as the teams played up and down hill in turn. The cricket square was literally used for rugby exercises during the winter, and a serious cricketer I knew in the area once told me he had played on it and he thought it was the worst cricket square he had ever seen.
18. There was also some staff accommodation in the grounds which was integrated into the estate and the school life. I was in the accommodation from time to time in ways that were always entirely proper. Towards the end of my time at the school some of

that accommodation sat empty. At one point the bursar and his wife moved into an onsite house, which adjoined the then day boy accommodation. The bursar's wife then proceeded to complain about the entirely predictable level of noise every day and they quickly moved out again. I recall at the time wondering what sort of decision making arrangements led to this madness.

Ethos

19. Keil encouraged personal responsibility, much freedom, independent thought and getting involved. That was certainly what SNR [REDACTED] while I was there, CGC [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED], was trying to sell and even when I went for the bursary exam the year before I started a lot of that ethos was apparent. I think that was consistent with the intent in 1915, when the school was established, although there seem to have been phases and evolutions over the years.

Governance and Headmasters

20. There were governors of the school and there were trustees of the trust that had funded the school. These were originally combined and then separated, however none of those people were the least bit qualified in education from what I could tell. Both the governors and the trustees seemed to operate a bit like a parish council with volunteers and amateurs. The headmaster was one hundred percent the heart and mind of the school other than the financial and legal elements of the trust. The dominance of the headmaster went right back to the founding.
21. There were changes in the leadership over my seven years at Keil. SNR [REDACTED] when I arrived was CGC [REDACTED] [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED] had turned what had been a failing school around and he was absolutely [REDACTED] when I started. He was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] and the school roll at that time was the strongest it ever was. He impressed my parents and he impressed me. I think he was the reason that my father's friend was so supportive of the school in advance of me starting there.

22. CGC [REDACTED] was always a visible presence, [REDACTED] and I think that all the academic success I saw during my time at Keil was based on his vision. I'm not sure he was all that honest, however. I think that if he was asked whether the school did a particular thing the answer was always "Yes". I think he was a salesman and, although this is only my opinion, I think it is conceivable that he would have protected the school's reputation if he thought that was for the greatest good.
23. IPT [REDACTED] the teacher who interviewed me prior to my starting, later told me that Mr CGC [REDACTED] had wanted to ban smoking in the staff room, and his approach was to casually mention it at the end of a staff meeting, inviting any dissenters to come and discuss their concerns in his office. According to Mr IPT [REDACTED], a handful of staff visited over the following days and it later transpired that each were told "Oh, that is surprising, you're the only one to have raised a concern".
24. Mr CGC [REDACTED] left the school [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. I think [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED]
SNR [REDACTED] was new when [REDACTED] took it and there had been a different arrangement previously. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] had a really extrovert [REDACTED] presence.
25. I recall a small number of high-impact changes were made [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and there was a good atmosphere in the school because of that. There was not root-and-branch reform, but [REDACTED] started doing the things that I assume CGC [REDACTED] and you could see the school [REDACTED] just a bit differently.
26. [REDACTED] I remember anticipating further changes and it was notable to me that Mr [REDACTED] did not make any changes which seemed to have an effect from my perspective. I quickly formed an opinion that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED].

27. We did see plenty of John Cummings formally, but I thought he was out of his comfort zone. I personally got on very well with him and I think I could see how he had been a successful Head of Sixth Form. He was an English teacher and I recall him taking a lesson on one occasion and he taught me almost everything I know about English Literature in that lesson. However, in every experience I had, it was my opinion that he was miscast as the leader of Keil.
28. Mr Cummings appeared to be shy and lack confidence and by the time I left the school, many senior pupils, teachers and parents discussed their frustration at Mr Cummings' style of leadership with me.
29. I was told by a teacher that there had been a staff meeting at which Tom Smith was called away and the meeting lost all momentum as Mr Smith was the driving force. Mr Cummings didn't seem to focus on the detail and we joked that any time we asked Mr Cummings a question the answer was always the same: "Ask Mr Smith". [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
CGC [REDACTED]
30. I never saw Tom Smith indicate anything but loyalty to John Cummings even after we had all left the school, however one of the teachers, Louis Dunn, seemed to be annoyed on one occasion that Mr Cummings had made the wrong announcement to the school in relation to the "80-some Reel" that Mr Dunn was organising and that did not feel unusual to me.
31. After I left, Tom Smith became headmaster and you could see that had a positive effect, albeit only for one year. He seems to have been key in taking over a local independent Primary close to the end, but unfortunately he didn't get the time to try and turn the school around before it closed.
32. Mr Smith was consistent in the management team of the 1990's and I doubt that anyone would argue that he was not the powerhouse of the school, perhaps a better description would be a force of nature. Louis Dunn once told me that Tom Smith had

come in while he was organising a foreign trip, and it felt “like a whirlwind had come through the room, leaving everything done and my shoelaces tied”.

33. That whirlwind was a fundamental influence on the school; for instance at Dumbarton Academy my scientifically-minded contemporaries were being forced to take (say) art rather than biology because that was how the columns worked. At Keil, Mr Smith once told me he had managed to write a timetable that satisfied the exact demands of forty-six pupils out of forty-eight in the year. He once took an assembly focused on the theme “if you want something done, ask a busy person” which, while thoroughly convincing, did not seem a very subtle reference to the way that work was undertaken by staff at the school.
34. In my opinion he was always busy, working to make things the way they should be, rather than worrying about how they were, and certainly not looking back at how they had been. I am much more cautious and I was sometimes frustrated, even mildly concerned, by his lack of doubt and his confidence in a good outcome, but I did not for a moment consider him to be negligent.
35. Tom Smith once told me that “being number two is easy, being number one is hard” which I felt was his personal experience, but I was never in a position to ask him how this related to Arbroath Academy or his relationship with Keil headmasters. He was never seen to criticise any of his colleagues, indeed he was never seen criticising anything. He would have been the last person to be paralysed with doubt or to have said “if you don’t do anything, you can’t be blamed when it goes wrong”. I did, however, have a teacher tell me that near the end of the school Mr Smith had confided some self-doubt to him, Mr Smith was concerned that if he took the wrong direction then everyone else would follow.

Staff

36. Below the senior management team there were heads of English and maths, which both had two or three teachers. There were also staff who were called head of, say, biology or physics, but some were the only teachers of those subjects. I do not think

any of the other departments had a second teacher who only taught that subject. One person would be in charge of the curriculum and the other would almost be a 'hired help' who would teach more than one subject or perhaps be head of something more minor. The P.E. teacher, for instance, also took some biology classes and the 'head' of biology would be responsible for what he was teaching.

37. It was a small teaching staff and there was quite a lot of drift in those staff over my years, which I now suspect was influenced by changing leadership and then the severe financial problems the school had. There was a phrase used in other evidence that Keil had been run on a shoestring, but I did not notice that in the teaching I experienced and I do not think my parents did either, at least not until near the end. Towards the end, staff who retired seemed to be replaced with ever-younger, and presumably cheaper, staff and in those last years some concern was raised about lack of experience.
38. The most static staff in that time included some who had been at Keil for as long as anybody could remember and some who [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED]. It feels to me that some long serving staff, perhaps including [REDACTED] CDK [REDACTED], had left the school as part of the drive for change [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED]. I think [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED] got [REDACTED] and those who arrived [REDACTED] remained the most loyal to the school at the end. At the end, when the financial situation had become so bad that the school was in imminent danger of closing, some of those staff pulled off everything they could to try and prevent it.
39. [REDACTED] IPT [REDACTED] was popular because he was seen as kind, compared to many of the teachers and some of the domestic staff who maintained order through toughness and an element of aggression when I started. I was reasonably well behaved but at Knoxland Primary School I had been 'recalibrated' from time to time by the teachers there, which could involve shouting. When I arrived there was a great deal of shouting at Keil and a strange lack of predictability in behaviour. Several teachers were often unfairly aggressive when responding to reasonable questions. I considered this unhelpful at the time, but not abusive and some of the descriptions I subsequently read in submissions to the Inquiry were, I feel, unbalanced. I do not have any

experience from which to say whether behaviours were inappropriate for the time, but, I know that there was no obvious correlation between how much a teacher displayed a lack of kindness and how much they were institutionalised at Keil. In an overwhelming majority of cases I believe that all the behaviours of teachers that I experienced were a result of their desire to do the right thing for their pupils and that unkindness was intended to create discipline or drive performance.

40. I found John McMurtrie to be strict but not aggressive, and I found him thorough in all things such as keeping a register (an unusual activity at Keil), or his attention to mentoring of me as my housemaster. While he was not overly kind to an 11 year old boy in the sense we would now know, he clearly did not intend to be unkind.
41. In my opinion, ECB [REDACTED] could be abrasive and unpredictable, though he must be credited as having looked after my welfare as my Tutor whenever called upon and I considered him the best [REDACTED] Tutor I had.
42. The late Frankie Burgess was abrasive and unpredictable in a slightly different way and she was new to the school with me. I once heard a rugby player approach her for permission to miss a class so he could play in a match. She had no choice in the matter and told him she gave her permission, but said she "hoped [he] was injured", which she quickly retracted, realising her mistake. In my experience she was professional and caring under a rough exterior.
43. In my opinion, Louis Dunn was quite prepared to shout, he could be unpredictable, and he was something of the gossip with pupils. He also looked after our welfare whenever required and he could be particularly in tune with a pupil's feelings, such that one phrase might bring about much comfort.
44. I first met CDK [REDACTED] in 1992 when he came to the school to invigilate, after, I suspect, he left the school as part of the drive for change CGC [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I was walking to the English classroom with a group of pupils when he came out of the art classroom with Mary Duncan, having finished an exam. He asked "Why are these peasants in my way?" and it was very clear that he wanted us to be

scared of him and he had a talent for making it happen. Mrs Duncan looked uncomfortable at this behaviour but said nothing, and I have since heard that some of the staff were scared to challenge Mr CDK too, going so far as to allow him to smoke a pipe in the staff room after it had been made no-smoking.

45. The culture in the school was that CDK was to be treated with at least as much respect as the headmaster. He had incredible support from Tom Smith who would not hear a word against him. Even the most open staff would respond to any challenge that Mr CDK was inappropriate with a worried look and a formal dismissal. For a period of time, I was terrified when Mr CDK came to invigilate, as any contact with him inevitably involved his efforts to make us fear him. He had a heart attack before I started Standard Grades and I felt relief that he would not be invigilating my exams and he would no longer have even this infrequent power over me.
46. I think that there was a change in the school over the years I was there, even allowing for my experience to be skewed by my getting older and more experienced. The staff got generally kinder. CGC
CGC
CGC
47. Much as it was a strength of the school that non-teaching staff were part of the community, they were probably entirely untrained in dealing with children. The non-teaching staff included some wonderful people, but if some other non-teaching staff became involved in discipline, they were allowed to behave in a manner we would never allow in a school now.
48. For instance, when I was in Transitus and I was returning dishes from the dining room to the kitchen I remember not knowing exactly what to do, but being scared to ask as the kitchen staff who were particularly unforgiving. I had to make a decision one day whether to dispose of waste soup in a sink or a bin, the soup was thick and I chose not to block the sink, rather than worry about it leaking from a bin bag. I was told "don't be so dense" and while I had to ask my parents what "dense" meant, the tone left me in no doubt what was intended.

Boarding House Structure

49. When I started at Keil there were four physical boarding houses: what was called School House in the main building, which was the girls' boarding house; two senior houses, known as Islay Kerr and Mackinnon House; and Mason House, which was for the younger boys. Mason House was later abolished because there were not enough boarding pupils and it wasn't physically suitable for modern boarding.
50. Each house had a housemaster and a deputy housemaster and one of those housemasters was Tom Smith, who was also the deputy headmaster. In the girls' house there was a housemistress and a deputy housemistress.
51. When I went to the school there was also a day house, which was John McMurtrie's responsibility for most of my time. As day pupil numbers and the number of girls grew, the day girls were brought out of the girls' house and all the day pupils were then split into MacNeill House and Mason House, reusing the name. There was not a distinct physical presence for the various day houses, but the structure was exactly the same in that it was based on form classes looking after academic and, obviously much different, pastoral matters.
52. Martin Coombs arrived at the school at the same time as I did and the journey he recollects from considering it the wrong school, to a place he wanted to stay, matches my experience though obviously in a different way. He became the 'housemistress' for the girls in School House. He brought a stability to the role that previously had seemed to be missing and I understand that the pastoral care the girls had during his time was excellent. I had long assumed that he had sought out that role as he was ideally suited to it in every way apart from his sex although I heard in evidence that it had been management who persuaded him. As was heard in the evidence to the Inquiry, Keil was ahead of the times in this matter.

Pupils

53. There could be up to two hundred and twenty pupils at Keil, but in reality the number was under that more often than not. When I started I think that roughly a third were girls and more of them would have been in the younger years. By the time I left it would have been roughly fifty-fifty boys and girls across all the year groups.
54. My understanding is that, in an effort to increase the school roll, efforts were made to enrol pupils with no UK connections. All were boarders and I don't know what was done to support them other than teaching of English as a Foreign Language. They were certainly given English names, although I do not know whether that was a good thing or not, especially as there seemed to be a limited range of names used.

Chiefs and deputies

55. Keil had a prefect system called chiefs and deputies, who were chosen by the headmaster, with support from the housemasters. That system went back to the founding of Keil and had evolved over the years. I was a deputy chief in my 6th year, between 1997 and 1998. I consider it was an invaluable education in leadership and responsibility. The experience of the senior chief in that year and others was nothing short of phenomenal and gave the opportunity to demonstrate leadership that I can only dream of aspiring to now.
56. The school had a reputation of being 'run by the boys', (in the days before girls) and they tried to maintain that same ethos in the more modern era when I was there. Jobs would be delegated by teachers and housemasters to the chiefs and deputies and they would make sure they got done. Direct instructions often came from the chiefs and deputies themselves in a similar way. Generally, all pupils were expected to do what the chiefs and deputies told them and staff would enforce this.
57. Chiefs and deputies would also delegate the odd task for their own benefit, for example early in my time I was asked to go to the tuck shop for one of them. I do not know what would have happened if I had said no. I think I would have been punished, but

it would probably just have been a cross word. Perhaps I would have been shouted at by a member of staff if they realised I had been told to do something and had not. I did not see that as a bad thing, these were minor domestic tasks, but I was not being asked to do that sort of thing every day.

58. The senior chief from my year is now a Commander RN, my chief an RAF officer, and I have some modest success as a manager. During that year I learnt to drive, I went out drinking, I obtained a credit card, my contemporaries left home and two years later I was a shift manager in a restaurant. I do not find it unreasonable that I might, as part of my position as a deputy chief, organise some pupils in the dining hall or arrange chairs for a school play. Indeed, I find it a great strength of the school that it offered the opportunity to take on such responsibility and I think the promotion from waiter to shift manager in a student job was directly related to my experiences at Keil.
59. I think the chiefs and deputies would have had a greater remit in the boarding houses, although I do not know if there was an expectation that boys would run after them. I did not hear of anything like you might read in English public school books of warming the toilet seat and that sort of thing and I do not think by the time I left, that remit entailed anything much more extreme than organising accommodation and a bit of discipline.
60. Chiefs and deputies did have power to give out lines, which we called a 'copy', but that system had almost collapsed by the time I left. There did not seem to be any standard, whereas when I joined and when I got a copy on the odd occasion that I did, I knew exactly what I needed to do. I knew what was expected of me and it was enforced by teachers. John Cummings changed the format for copies from copying the school rules, to copying the leader article from The Herald, but none of us knew what the leader article was and the vagueness resulted in copies from the sports pages and so on. Staff did not seem aligned on standards, or inclined to maintain them. This would partly be due to John Cumming's style with detail, but was also a typical example of kindness increasing, but discipline and organisation decreasing which I don't think necessarily has to follow.

61. I guess there would be more opportunities for abuse of pupil positions at the time I started at Keil because it was a tougher environment then and the school was less liberal. In the day boy environment, I did see a broom handle wrapped in electrician's tape being waved about. I seem to recall it was referred to as the 'pleb stick', the implication being that it was designed for hitting younger pupils. I was not hit by the stick, and I do not believe I saw it used, I did not consider it a serious threat to me but I have always wondered when it was last used.
62. I think when I started that I was seeing the tail-end of something different, a culture of bullying, however by the time I left, I saw no chiefs and deputies institutionally abusing their position or bullying others. When I was a deputy chief I do not believe that any of us in the day environment ever attempted bullying at school. We certainly had nothing like the pleb stick, although I guess I probably spoke to pupils in ways that I would not do now as an adult and at work.

Routine at Keil School

First day

63. I started at Keil in August 1991, when I was eleven years old as a Primary 7, or Transitus, pupil. My Transitus class consisted of sixteen people, four of whom were day boys and between two and four were day girls. I think the others were all boarders, more boys than girls. There were quite a lot of day boys starting in the year above me as well.
64. I had been used to the 1970's specifically designed building that was Knoxland Primary, where everything was contained inside and at first I was utterly confused by the layout of Keil. The day boys seemed to spend a lot of time following the boarders who seemed to know where they were going because they had started a day earlier, had the opportunity for a better tour, or perhaps because they might have had older brothers at the school.

65. The day boys in the Transitus class were put in a big tutor group along with the 1st year pupils, which probably included 2nd year pupils as well. Our first day was a Wednesday and our tutor was John McMurtrie, who absolutely got it right with the group.
66. I think John McMurtrie had come from the state sector and I cannot fault his introduction to the school within his remit in Day House. We were treated as though we were new and we were led through everything. Although he was very professional in never criticising his colleagues, I believe he was one of the few people to care about any of the domestic arrangements for day pupils at that time. I also believe that he fought hard to align the school to support day boys
67. There were about sixteen of us in the Transitus class and academically the school was well prepared for this new year group. [REDACTED] class teacher was QTW [REDACTED], who was in his mid-forties at the time and unmarried. He lived on the site until he bought a house nearby. We also had a well-equipped classroom, but Mr QTW [REDACTED] had also just joined the school and he seemed to be poorly informed about life there.
68. Outside of these rooms things were not well organised. My first day was not a good experience. I did not want to be at Keil and I felt it was not well organised and we were expected to know what to do. I was used to Knoxland Primary School, where they did not let you out of their sight, you knew what you were doing and where you were meant to be. I have no idea how some of the people in my class knew what was happening. There was no map and we did not know where we were going. Lunch was pretty rough too with an assumption that we knew what was going on and we were asked why we did not know what we should have been doing.
69. There did not seem to be any arrangements for us to go home at the end of the day either. We were just standing around after school, wondering what we should be doing. This was probably due to the boarders having further structure in the evening and nobody thought to have arrangements for the day pupils at the end of the day. My mum knew one of the governors, who was also one of the other parents, and she had asked a lot of logistical questions of this governor, however in practice I learned

that the governor seemed to have a remarkably lax grasp of the logistics and much she had told my mum was wrong.

Routine as a day pupil

70. A school day started at 8:45 am, with an assembly four days a week and tutor group on a Friday. Keil was only a short distance from where we stayed but my parents used to drive me there in the morning for the first few years although I started walking home quite early on. After assembly or tutor group there would be lessons until lunch with a morning break in between. In the afternoon we had more lessons and then what were called activities. Sometimes the afternoon was inverted and we had activities first, depending on the daylight. Most people wanted activities last, so as the school became more liberal eventually we stopped the 'winter timetable' and we ended up trying to play sport in the dark sometimes. While that suited me, it was hard to argue it was entirely sensible and I did think that it was an indicator of the move away from being rugby and border orientated.
71. Activities were compulsory and a lot of the time it was rugby, although there was also a huge range of other sports including badminton, running, swimming, sailing and football, the latter often grudgingly. There was also non-sporting stuff, like chess and electronics and that sort of thing. There were almost endless opportunities for extra-curricular activities, which I considered to be another immense credit to the school and another of the things that CGC had been selling and Tom Smith was extremely supportive of.
72. The boarders had a set prep period after tea, which to me as a day pupil sounded like most of the evening. I believe CGC that was strictly adhered to, although I do not know that for a fact, but in my first Transitus year I had enough homework to fill that prep period, albeit I did mine at home. Homework eased off after that and sometimes I did not have any or sometimes I would do it during the odd free period I might have had in the school day. I was pleased that we were not overburdened with homework and I am not personally convinced that children should

be doing work in the evenings, but I think the CGC levels of homework were an indication of the academic focus.

73. There were no lessons at the weekend, but, on the face of it, school was six days a week, with sport on Saturdays. On Saturdays rugby could be all day traveling to away matches, although initially for me, because I was terrible at rugby and would never be chosen to play, I got Saturdays off. Eventually the school came up with a compromise that I would organise the pitches, which meant I got out of rugby practice but I had to come in on Saturdays and that suited me down to the ground.
74. As a deputy chief I came in at the weekend and did some supervision of a punishment called 'NH', which is an abbreviation for Natural History, which involved boys working in the grounds, picking up leaves and that sort of thing. There were also frequent events at the weekend such as 'Old Boys Day' or Bursary Day, and I willingly volunteered to come in for these as I moved up through the school.

Mealtimes/Food

75. Lunch was compulsory for all pupils and was the main meal of the day. Staff did not have to attend, although a lot of them chose to. There were around eighteen tables of between twelve and fourteen people, supervised by senior pupils. Everyone sat at one sitting.
76. At first the school employed a chef and Paul Dellow's food was wholesome and plentiful, although perhaps not always adventurous. Initially the choice was take it or leave it, which I thought was wrong. I did not like curry, for example, so I did not eat it, which meant all I ate was dry rice. The food was brought to our tables by younger pupils and the oldest pupils would serve the youngest first although I suppose they always made sure there was enough for themselves. I was not aware of anybody going hungry, except when something was served up that they simply did not like. We drank tap-water and I still consider that to be a lesson in self-discipline rather than a privation.

77. An outside caterer was then brought in, Stephenson Catering, and they delivered a more varied range. There did seem to be a bizarre affection for capers in everything, but it was a range that appealed more, although was perhaps less healthy. The key modernisation was the introduction of a choice of three dishes, but not in a cafeteria style. I note that at my primary school I had full choice, and I always chose hotdog and chips. I certainly ate better at Keil.
78. Tom Smith told me that Stephenson Catering had offered to serve and clear tables, and he had been forced to agree to the former due to the layout of the room. However, he refused the latter as he felt it would have broken a tradition of eighty years and I agreed with him that pupils benefited from clearing up after themselves, although that did not include cleaning the plates by the time I arrived. It has been suggested that this was a cynical ploy to reduce the contract a little, but I find it difficult to believe it could have made much difference and I see no reason to doubt Mr Smith's sincerity. I got on very well with Stephenson Catering and they contributed to a happy community within the school and that seemed very much to be the ethos of Keil in the mid-1990's.

Washing/bathing

79. I understand that there was always access to hot showers in all the boarding houses. As day pupils we had ample facilities for sports which we were free to use any time we wanted unless we were in classes. They were extremely basic though.
80. Later on, when I was eighteen, I happened to be in the cellar of one of the senior boarding houses, Islay Kerr, and saw it had what seemed to be a dirt floor. The ceiling was really low and I had to bend as I walked around. I happened to stick my head round a corner and found the showers were there next to stairs leading up into the boarding house. I had not expected anything better than the sports showers in the day boy accommodation, but it was worse and I could not believe that was how the boarders lived.

Clothing/uniform

81. The school had its own uniform shop so my mum and I went up while the school was closed over the summer before I started and bought almost everything I would need.
82. The uniform was a green blazer with gold braid, which I thought was very impressive. I had not worn a blazer since about Primary two. We also wore a green and gold tie, which we took off during the day along with the blazer, and we wore grey trousers, white shirts and a green V-neck woollen pullover.
83. On special occasions and to church we wore our number one uniform, which included kilts. Special occasions would be speech day, for photographs and sometimes if the school was receiving visitors.

Schooling

84. At the end of Transitus there was no question that I was not happy to stay at the school and by the end of my 1st year I do not think there was ever a question that I was not just happy, although there were some ups and downs and I always hated being at a school where I had to go to rugby practice. My year increased from 16 in Transitus to over 40 in 1st year and all the people I am in touch with now came after Transitus. It was much harder than Knoxland or, I think, the organised transition to Dumbarton Academy, but I was more challenged and I learnt a great deal. There had also been some absolutely brilliant experiences from at least Christmas in Transitus.
85. The quality of the education at Keil could be a bit varied. In essence I thought it was as good as anything that I was aware of, such as Knoxland or Dumbarton Academy, but I do not think it would have been as consistently high as say Glasgow High School. The High School of Glasgow did, however, have a lot more money and was able to be very selective.

86. There were a lot of absolute high points, with experienced and committed teachers delivering more than the budget or facilities might have supported. That tended to be focused on the core academic and creative curriculum.
87. Particularly in the less central parts of the curriculum, sometimes there was only one teacher for a certain subject and if they took ill there could be no teaching at all. As the teachers got younger, the curriculum felt more disjointed.
88. Generally every morning we would go to assembly first thing, before going straight to class. The Transitus curriculum was very well organised and within the confines of the classroom I strongly believe that my Primary 7 year was academically better, more challenging and more supportive, than I would have experienced at Knoxland.
89. The educational experience was not without its faults, but the school's small size was as much a strength as a weakness. At most times my classes were small and they were usually well organised and could easily flex quite considerably to support individual needs. The curriculum was reasonably broad and seemed little different to that at Dumbarton Academy, except that it did not include some of the non-academic and non-creative subjects like Home Economics or Standard Grade P.E.
90. In [CGC] and beyond, Keil seemed to have a solid structure for the teaching of all academic and creative subjects with most classes run efficiently and successfully. There was generally one teacher per subject except in English and Maths. Some overlap occurred around peripheral teachers and subjects and this provided some extra capacity for the teaching of younger classes. For instance, Frankie Burgess taught IT and Physics, Mrs Clenaghan seemed to be employed primarily as a housemistress and hockey mistress and she seemed to have some spare time which meant she would teach Social Education.
91. We spent about three hours of the day in that Transitus year with [QTW] learning [] and [] amongst other subjects. The rest of that year felt more like secondary education with a bit of French, a bit of P.E. and a bit of art, etc. The

teachers for those subjects would sometimes come to the classroom and sometimes we would go to them.

92. QTW [REDACTED] was an enormously well prepared, charismatic teacher, although he could be highly strung as a trade-off for his passion. It seemed as if he really understood the psychology of teaching and he struck me as an educationalist. He did a lot of [REDACTED], which would have been unusual at the time.
93. John McMurtrie remained my tutor for a year before he got promoted to housemaster, through which I came back to him when I was in 5th year. As my tutor we would only see him formally once a week on a Friday although informally he was available at any time.
94. The late OPR [REDACTED] was an uncompromising individual who, by his own admission, preferred his role with older pupils. He was a superb teacher of [REDACTED]. He was supportive and charismatic, with a terrifying grasp of his subject and a terrifying discipline in the curriculum. However, in my experience he was a strict, but not terrifying individual. Although I understand that he did shout at his boarders, he did not need to shout in the classroom. In all the learning I have done I do not see how anybody could have taught that course better than he did and I think the results his pupils, certainly this pupil, achieved, showed that.
95. I considered OPR [REDACTED] a mentor while I was a senior pupil and a friend when I left the school. He was a great friend to a great number of people over the years. While I was at school it was clear that he was the teacher and I was the pupil, and in terms of that relationship, he came first. While I considered him wrong, or rather behind the times, on many subjects, I do not doubt his sincerity or motives which I believe were to do the best for his pupils, nor do I doubt that he would protect pupils from any harm as he saw it.
96. Initially I found OZC [REDACTED] to be a strange and difficult individual though he was immensely popular with some pupils. As I got towards the end of my time at Keil, he showed a surprising interest in me, given that we had nothing in common and he had

never taught me. I think he found older pupils easier to get on with. We developed a good relationship, and he would stop to talk to me in the street once I had left school. I think we may also have exchanged some emails. This was not in any way inappropriate, and I consider it a great strength of Keil that pupils transitioned into equals on leaving.

97. When we were first given sex education, it was in the [REDACTED] class in 1st or 2nd year. The course involved us working individually and silently through ancient textbooks from a time when houses did not have showers and sanitary towels were hung from belts. Rather than teaching, KPS [REDACTED] sat at the front of the class with a pile of textbooks and a bottle of correction fluid. Each time we found any graffiti we swapped our book with one of his and he painted over the issue; he was kept fully employed.
98. Mr KPS [REDACTED] did not tolerate the slightest indiscipline, and while he treated his absurd role in the proceedings seriously, he looked thoroughly uncomfortable throughout. Subsequent sex education was taught by female teachers. On one occasion a teacher, perhaps Mrs Clenaghan, asked "are any of you having sex, you know it's illegal", which predictably brought about little response. On another occasion I recall a very open discussion, with QTZ [REDACTED], that resulted in hilarity, but this seemed like a successful lesson and in the following class Adrienne Smith identified what had happened and very professionally acknowledged the need to address "the elephant in the room".
99. IPT [REDACTED]'s relaxed attitude was fun in his activities, for example Chess would involve general playing [REDACTED], but I found this irritating in Standard Grade [REDACTED] where he had too much time for the boarders and not enough time for [REDACTED]. I once asked him if [REDACTED], a boarder of my year, was his favourite pupil and he replied "I have a lot of time for [REDACTED], but I don't have favourites". However, I attended his Higher and A-Level [REDACTED] classes and I always got on well with him. Accordingly, when I met Mr IPT [REDACTED] in Dumbarton shortly after the school closure when I was twenty I stopped to talk to him. He had nothing to say to me and quickly moved on, which surprised me enough that I remember mentioning it to friends.

100. Allison McGregor taught music with a wide-ranging commitment to nurturing talent throughout the school. She maintained order without a hint of aggression. I was talentless in her class and this was managed to our mutual benefit, I only regret that the school put so much emphasis on making music and so little on learning about it.
101. Mary Duncan maintained order in her art class in a professional but nurturing style that made her widely liked. Adrienne Smith taught French and German in the most professional manner and maintained order with only an appropriate strictness.
102. Robert Evans did not need to take action to keep order in his highly disciplined and charismatic chemistry classroom and he always struck me as the best teacher of a curriculum in the school, but he seemed ill-placed in the Keil community. In just one year he got the best out of me and I went on to study chemistry at university. I had thought of not taking it before I went into his class and I cannot see how that course could have been taught any better.
103. One teacher of English and French came across to me as unbalanced and prone to embarking on ranting. For instance, she gave an assembly where she stated that it was unfair that "men with a lot of girlfriends are macho, while women with a lot of boyfriends are tarts" which I found unsuitable for a group including 10 year olds. I had the impression that she left under a cloud but I would be unlikely to hear as the school would deal with anything like that quietly. It is possible that my perception came from a form of safeguarding that was going on behind the scenes.
104. KPS [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] Master and he taught [REDACTED], which was almost exclusively [REDACTED]. He also supervised some [REDACTED], but I did not think he understood much of it and it was all about working through books. After a time, KPS [REDACTED] took ill and began attending work sporadically. He was replaced by a former pupil who sort of drifted in and started teaching the years below mine and the school just gave up teaching my year [REDACTED]. I think that was the first sign I saw that the school was not just less glossy than CGC [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED] would have indicated, but also starting to struggle to deliver core functions.

105. A teacher once brought a retired drug-dealer to the school to give us a presentation on how to ensure you do not take illegal drugs unless know what is in them. On the face of it, one boy ended up ingesting dog worming powder having been asked to identify if it was salt or sugar, although I never worked out if that was real. Tom Smith looked apoplectic at the dealer's closing summary "Don't take anything if you don't know what it is" and Mr Smith forcefully added "It would be better if you didn't take anything at all" before quickly ushering the dealer and the well-meaning teacher out of the door.
106. Mr Smith was an indefatigable teacher of chemistry, never giving up when it seemed to me that the pupil he was talking to was a lost cause. He would continue to teach anybody that sat in his class until eventually he got there. When covering for KPS he turned into an enthusiastic and charismatic teacher of driving far more effort from me than Mr KPS ever could have. His pre-exams advice remained with me throughout university, and I am amazed at how much of the advice that I give my teams at work now originates from him.

Sporting activities

107. My experience of rugby at Keil leaves me with an enduring focus on the negatives. Keil rugby felt like a violent game that is not safe for children to play and, in my view, allowing someone to be sent to hospital every other week, as I counted in my senior years, is deeply troublesome. I believe that the positives of rugby that I heard so much about at Keil were greatly exaggerated with the game just as easily generating arrogance, cheating and violent bullies.
108. Furthermore, I have absolutely no interest in rugby and I have no aptitude for it. I recall looking out on a grey West of Scotland afternoon considering that my contemporaries at Knoxland were enjoying the benefits of their final year while I prepared to endure yet another uncaring rugby practice. If I did not like sport in general before Keil, then I certainly hated having to play rugby. I hated the obsession with the game, I hated the way that it used to make me unhappy and I hate rugby now. While many people I

know in adult life enjoy rugby and play it in an inclusive and friendly environment, that was nothing like my experience which, with brief exceptions, was miserable.

109. Mr **KPS** was the stereotypical **OPR** teacher; I recall seeing Tom Smith discipline a boy for a reasonably serious matter and telling him to wait in the corridor. Mr **KPS** came over and quietly said "I need you to play on Saturday and I'm doing everything I can, but you need to watch yourself son". He was very much at arm's length and unapproachable except when talking about sport, but he just had an utterly different view of the world to me in which sport was really important and the best way to develop an unenthusiastic pupil was to be horrible to them to drive sporting performance. I imagine that he felt that appealing to a rugby player to stay in line was his way of helping them, although my opinion is that it was more likely to create arrogance and undermine Mr Smith.
110. The obsession with rugby was easing all the time while I was at Keil and the staff eventually decided that I did not need to attend all the practices. Around my 2nd or 3rd year, I stopped attending altogether and my role was to prepare the pitches for the match. I set about learning the role, I would carry the post protector kit and flags to the pitches and I enjoyed making sure I delivered the tasks I was set, latterly supervising others delivering them. I took pride in being part of something that was important to the school, but around which I had no ability or interest in in any other way. That was primarily a result of **OPR**'s leadership in this regard but **KPS** also seemed to have some admiration for the effort put in. The way in which Keil provided that environment is something that deserves significant recognition.
111. Every conceivable activity, including sports day, involved some sort of inter-house element, which I thought was all pretty good humoured rivalry. It was all a bit amateur and in my later years, perhaps as the school changed, I participated in sports I had no talent for because there would not be enough people otherwise and we all wanted to muck in. I found this to be an enormous strength of the school and such a contrast to the worship of rugby talent.

Religious instruction

112. To all extents and purposes Keil was Scottish Protestant and it seemed to have little interest in other religions with many of the staff apparently bringing forth their own personal faith. This was no different to my experiences elsewhere, though I admit that most of my experiences were in explicitly Protestant environments. However, there were English staff who talked about other forms of Protestantism and the school seemed to have a good relationship with the neighbouring Roman Catholic nunnery where the Catholic boarders worshipped. Keil was actually the first place I had been where West of Scotland Roman Catholics and Protestants got on without it being an issue.
113. In Dumbarton in 1991 primaries such as Knoxland and St. Patrick's were separated solely to perpetuate Christian sectarianism, though it would be presented in different terms, and Keil was a very positive influence in comparison.
114. Tom Smith has given me the impression that they were forced to start teaching Religious Education (R.E.) and so they did the minimum, preferring to focus on core academic subjects.
115. Alister Ramage was the Head of R.E. and his move to this post from Head of English, a department that had other teachers and taught examinable curricula, was widely considered a demotion. I suppose that this would have been part of CGC's drive to move out the old-guard though I have never known what issue he would have had with Mr Ramage.
116. Mr Ramage was outstanding as a charismatic teacher who brought R.E., Drama and History to the new Primary 7 age group. He also did more than anyone to help us understand what was going on around us at the school. I understand that Mr Ramage had taught at Keil for some time, but he was never aggressive in my experience, and he kept order through entirely professional means. He was the only teacher to talk about first-hand experience of using the belt, but he did not give me any impression of

how it had been used at Keil. At the end of my Transitus year, he left the school for a late, but apparently very successful, career as a Church of Scotland Minister.

117. Mr Ramage was replaced by Mrs Kidd who was much less a natural teacher, but more evangelical in her personal faith and very much interested in the delivery of good works. Under Mrs Kidd, we had some instruction on other world religions, which seemed to be consistent with the level taught at the time in the state sector, according to some sources that I had. I particularly recall that her R.E. lessons wove in the theory of evolution, which I considered to be an intelligent and challenging approach.
118. The school chaplain was Rev Boyd from the Church of Scotland West Kirk and he was a very nice man, who genuinely seemed to be interested in the pupils. I understood the role of Chaplain to be about bringing elements of worship into the school on set occasions, just as it was at Knoxland, and I never saw him seeking out pupils to talk to in any meaningful way, although if I approached him he would always engage in conversation.

Trips and holidays

119. The school was brilliant at extra-curricular activities, and there were all sorts of trips. I have provided the Inquiry with a copy of 'Keil School Magazine', which includes details of some of the trips that were organised.
120. A small number of the boarders used to get taken out every weekend, others would go home. Martin Coombs and IPT, who were both unmarried and lived on site, would take pupils away to whatever happened to be on in the country. They might go hillwalking, or go on a day out to the safari park and that sort of thing.
121. In Transitus, every Thursday afternoon we went to different places to learn about them, which was absolutely brilliant. They were great experiences, but they were run in the Keil style with minimal risk assessment and low levels of supervision. We would travel halfway across Scotland in the school minibus to different places. Mr QTW organised

it very well, although I did not enjoy travelling in the bus. The bus sat sixteen, but there were twenty in it and I was not a good traveller.

122. Tom and Adrienne Smith used to take pupils away to things such as bowling with two teachers because they were married but Martin Coombes used to take people away on his own in a way that would not seem at all inappropriate at the time.
123. The day staff tended to take pupils to more formal events such as theatre trips. The head of English would frequently organise theatre trips as part of the academic curriculum. There would be three teachers and a coach load of pupils on those trips. The head of rugby also used to take people to international matches, for which there was always a competition to try and get on the bus. These sorts of trips would look and feel exactly like anything else I experienced in the 80's and 90's.
124. I went on two foreign trips which were superbly organised by Mr Dunn, his tour of Paris remains a high point of my cultural life.

Work

125. There were cleaners by the time I left Keil, but I do not think there were any when I started, when I think the boarders cleaned their houses themselves. The houses certainly did not look as if they were being professionally cleaned any time I was in them. I personally would not have liked to live in such conditions.
126. Although we did have some chores, which were known as 'orderlies', those I experienced as a day pupil were not particularly effective and I doubt we were actually saving much money in the way they had eighty years earlier. Orderlies seemed like a perfectly normal way of having pupils look after their surroundings and at the time it was not uncommon for the children to be involved in tasks such as stacking chairs at Sunday School. The Brownies my sister attended seemed to be entirely predicated on learning to do the housework.

127. If there was heavy lifting to be done, for example setting up a room and moving chairs about, we got to do it. When I was younger I would be doing the lifting and when I was older I would organise it. My personal style would usually be to muck in, though I think some contemporaries would watch when supervising. Day pupils, for instance, would always clear the marquee after speech day. It needed to be cleared before school was vacated because otherwise the locals would come and tear it apart. Boarders would be seeing their parents for the first time in weeks so they were excused that duty. I think John McMurtrie took pride in delivering the task, and that would cause me to feel pride in delivering it for him.
128. There was an expectation that if we were told to do something we did it. I was expected to push a teacher's car once, when his wheel was stuck in the grass, which was covered in snow. I did think at the time that the expectation did not feel right, but I knew that if I had not the staff would not have been at all happy and I would not have found sympathy from my parents. However, most requests were fleeting and I do not have any recollection of being forced to labour.

Healthcare

129. There was a matron, who I believe was a qualified nurse, and she was very much in the background, but she was a lovely person who was always immediately approachable. Her job, as I understood, was solely looking after healthcare issues, such as sprained ankles, cuts and bruises. The boarders might go to her with a sore head and she would give them painkillers, if she felt it necessary, she would refer them to a G.P. There was a doctor associated with the school, but I am not quite sure how that worked as it was only related to the boarders. I always felt that the boarders were getting the same level of medical care that I would get.

Birthdays and Christmas

130. Nobody ever asked me when my birthday was, and I never expected it, however I think I heard that Martin Coombs celebrated every boarding girl's birthday. That was the sort of person he was and the girls who boarded in his time seemed to be as happy

as you would expect anybody to be, which I think was largely down to him. I do not think the boarding boys got that sort of treatment, except perhaps from the Smiths towards the end when the younger boys moved in. I never understood this tradition where the boys, en masse, would jump on a boy whose birthday it was, though I do think I saw it on a couple of occasions. I think it was well-intentioned, but I do not know how that had come about historically, nor if it was ever taken too far.

131. We celebrated Christmas with a carol service on the rundown to the holidays and there was the odd ceilidh, although more so as I got older, particularly as some were organised by pupils. The school interwove the Christian element together with the secular elements into the school calendar. The calendar was always very busy with regular events that were fun for the pupils and good life experiences although these were always traditional Scottish events, such as bonfire night and the Burns Supper, but not Diwali or Chinese New Year.

Personal possessions

132. I do not think there was any particular policy on whether boarders could have personal possessions. I know that some boys did have some posters and others brought guitars and things like that, but they did not have the things boarders would normally bring now. There were no laptop computers then and no mobile phones. If a boarder wanted to phone home they had to use one of the payphones in their houses and pay for the calls themselves.

Visitors

133. I think there was an open policy on visitors being welcome to see what happened at the school, including a few dignitaries with connections to the school. If my parents had wanted to see anything at any time they would have been welcome, as would any of the other parents. In the couple of years after I left the school and before it closed, I would have been quite welcome and other old boys were welcomed too. Apart from on days when large numbers of visitors attended events at the school there was no culture that visitors might wander about the school other than with an escort.

External Inspections

134. There was an inspection in CGC [REDACTED], during the first year I was at Keil, that was carried out by HMI. I did not read the report at the time, although I since have, however my parents did read it then and they were disappointed. I think Dumbarton Academy had had an inspection, which contributed in their decision to send me to Keil because the Academy had not come out well, then Keil had an inspection which was not altogether positive either.
135. The report stated that the PE curriculum was limited and suggested branching out into gymnastics, so the school purchased a lot of equipment that I never saw used. All of a sudden, ancient sports benches appeared and wall bars were fitted in the gym. It was as if they did so simply to show that the school was making an effort, or maybe to mislead a future inspection into thinking the equipment was used.
136. There was also an inspection in either 1997, or 1998, again carried out by HMI and which specifically looked at boarding. I think the inspectors spent a lot of time interviewing the boarders, but I was interviewed in a group as part of the student council. They asked us about the headmaster, John Cummings, and we were able to give honest answers to our opinions about his leadership.
137. The results seemed to be alright when they came back, although I believe they did comment on the boarding accommodation, including the showers in the cellar of Islay Kerr. I have never managed to obtain a copy of that report.
138. Both inspections seemed to be handled in the same way as other schools handled them at the time. We were expected to be on our best behaviour as we always were when visitors came in, although my natural reaction would have been to give a good presentation of the place anyway. There was never anything that I felt I did not want to say. We did try and keep troublemakers away in the second inspection when I was eighteen, because we knew some would present the wrong face. That was about not

giving somebody a platform rather than hiding anything. Had I wanted to say anything about the school, I think I would have been able to do so.

Support

139. Keil will have thought they were providing someone for the emotional wellbeing of the pupils and if it was asked for I think that would have been provided, however far less effort was put into pushing that than would be expected now. Housemasters and deputy housemasters were always there, but I do not know how approachable some of them will have been. The school did introduce housemothers, who just happened to be the wives of the people who were already there and I am sure they had a strong bond with the boarding pupils, but I think that was about the school wanting to be seen to have more pastoral care and perhaps about financial reward for women who were already doing the job.
140. Early in the winter term of 1991 the 1st XV Rugby team got to a late stage of some competition and the whole school was allowed to attend the match. I had never been to a rugby match and I had little desire to go, but I was unceremoniously told that I had volunteered to be bussed across the country for an unknown time to an unknown location as I had not opted out.
141. For some reason I had never had the opportunity to opt out and, at least in part, I seem to recall that was because they had not asked day pupils in time to make suitable arrangements. My parents were expecting me home, but I was going to a rugby match, and I was left in tears. However, going into Mr QTW's class he took one look at me and asked what was wrong, listened to the issue, and immediately sorted it with care and compassion. I think I recall that the pastoral staff such as John McMurtrie responded quickly to Mr QTW's request, and they were surprised that there was an issue, if I had just asked they would have sorted it, but it was Mr QTW who was in tune with the need to look out for an 11 year old.
142. There was also the matron and there was the chaplain, who I think occasionally came round and talked to some of the boarders. I got on great with him, but we day pupils

could definitely avoid that if we wanted. It was typical of the Keil I knew that the caretaker, Sid Mansfield, was also the sort of person who, if you'd gone to him, would have tried to help.

143. There was no formalised support structure, no process whatsoever, but the whole organisation was a sort of family where everyone was meant to be responsible for everyone. I know that if I had gone into school and told them about something happening at home then the school would absolutely have been there for me. I just suspect they would have had to get together to work out what they were going to do, certainly asking Mr Smith, rather than follow any policy.
144. I was aware of the NSPCC, Esther Rantzen and 'Childline', but nobody ever told me how I should contact them if I needed to speak to those people. There might have been a number stuck above the payphones, but I think that if anybody had phoned Childline it would have been seen negatively. I think the attitude of the school would be that they could have dealt with whatever the problem was, if they had just been told.
145. John McMurtrie used to emphasise that if we needed to speak to someone we could, and I remember his exact words, we could talk to anyone, to matron, to a chief or a deputy, or we could talk to him. I believe that was quite genuine and generally true, but there were some really macho teachers who I could not imagine taking a 'soft' problem to, and even at the time I thought the chief/deputy line was a bit unlikely. I think some people will have gone to IPT because he was close to the boys, far too close, and Martin Coombs or Mary Duncan for instance would have been very open to hearing a pupil's problems. These days, if my children are unhappy it is dealt with immediately, that was not the culture at Keil, or other places I experienced, and there was much I kept to myself. However, when anything did spill over even the toughest teachers always helped immediately.

Discipline

146. Both CGC and Tom Smith made it quite clear when I first started at Keil that when we met anybody visiting the school we were to be on good behaviour. If any adult came into a classroom we stood up and we were quiet and my parents thought that was brilliant. I would be impressed by that now. They saw that as the discipline and respect you would expect.
147. Lines, detentions, suspensions and expulsions were all ways that discipline was dealt with. We called lines 'copies' and they were given out by chiefs and deputies, or by staff, although staff did not use them very often. The main punishment though was NH, which stood for Natural History. NH involved pupils working around the estate for between two and six hours per day over the weekend. Tom Smith seems to have kept an eye on that, although a good teacher did not need to give excessive amounts. The not so good teachers gave NH out too much I think and it was their performance he was monitoring. All punishments were monitored by house staff for their impact on pupils although every teacher seemed to do that in their own way.
148. Detention was meant to be for poor work, so there was some, albeit it didn't get used very often. It was not meant to be for behaviour. There was also some casual discipline used like telling someone to stand in a particular spot for an hour.
149. There was no control over the power Keil had to suspend or exclude anyone, it being a private school, and I saw that as a positive. I think people were sometimes suspended, but they stayed at the school, which was probably for pragmatic reasons if their parents were not available to come and get them. I thought the school was always a bit slow with the expulsions in cases of extreme and sustained incompatible behaviour, which I would imagine would be for financial reasons, although perhaps there will have been a welfare concern for the perpetrator too.
150. There was no formal corporal punishment when I was at Keil, I think it was illegal by that time. One of the teachers, who I was briefly at the school with, had a nickname based on use of the belt, "Stingers" as he was meant to have said "It's going to sting",

when that was spoken of the belt was seen as purely historical. I never witnessed, not heard of, any physical punishment by staff or chiefs or deputies during my time at Keil.

Running away

151. It would not have been hard to run away from Keil. If I had wanted to and if I had the money, I could have just walked out the door and got a train to London, it might have taken a while for anyone to notice. Tom Smith did talk about someone running away before my time and his taking immediate action, and there may have been an incident while I was there of somebody trying, but all I would have heard was that this was dealt with. If there was an incident when I was at school, it was only discussed in gossip as the norm was for individual confidentiality rather than openness.

Abuse at Keil School

152. Abuse, to my mind, has some form of intent, malice or gross neglect and in those terms I certainly never suffered any sort of abuse at Keil and nor was I aware of any during my time. There was initially levels of bullying that I did not like but only now do I consider abuse, and there was a passive acceptance of that bullying that I would now consider naive, but not negligent, as today's standards were unknown at the time. I now know about IPT [REDACTED] which happened while I was at the school, but which have shocked everyone I have ever heard from.
153. It is fair to say that the standards of risk assessment could be *ad hoc*. After a school trip when I was 11, I told my parents that someone had fallen out of the minibus. It was not true, it was just an immature joke and I did not realise that was not obvious, but as a direct result of that on the next trip a senior pupil was sent with us in the back of the minibus as a form of supervision. That was not how things should be risk assessed, it had simply been decided upon based on my saying something to my parents that was not even true and them mentioning it to a school governor they happened to know.

154. When I was much older, I recall noting my concern that a teacher had allowed pupils to travel around the school grounds on the roof of their vehicle, but I never saw it again after I (and perhaps others) raised it. Freedom seemed to be taken quite far and I heard stories, including directly from IPT [REDACTED], of heavy drinking in the boarding houses and I heard that OPR [REDACTED] was known for shouting when he caught pupils returning from the pub.
155. The closest I came to abuse was the way CDK [REDACTED] behaved, but it was very much fleeting due to his role at the school at that time. If he behaved like that daily as a teacher, or housemaster, then I would consider that abuse. I understand that he had been an absolute horror as a teacher before I came to the school and I understand he had been free with the belt. I do not find that hard to believe as the invigilator I knew while I was at the school took every opportunity to treat children appallingly. I only had two or three experiences, but his aim was to terrify children and I feel that he enjoyed the superiority that gave him.
156. I could see other staff were not comfortable with his behaviour and I tried to talk with them many times. Nobody, however, would engage with me as to why this man was allowed to come to a school and behave in this manner. I think this situation was indicative of a school that had been tolerant of that sort of behaviour in the past. They must have known his behaviour was at the least unnecessary and yet incredible respect was shown for him.
157. CDK [REDACTED] was a friend and colleague of OPR [REDACTED] and he dismissed my concerns when I raised them with him when I was around 18 years old, stating that Mr CDK [REDACTED] was "firm by fair". I can only imagine that he meant Mr CDK [REDACTED] treated everyone equally rather than that his behaviour was equitable. You see in his evidence to the Inquiry that Tom Smith knew that CDK [REDACTED] had run Islay Kerr House on "almost militaristic" grounds and that he did not approve. No matter how aggressive or unfair any teacher was, I never encountered anyone who seemed to enjoy their power as Mr CDK [REDACTED] did and both OPR [REDACTED] and Tom Smith were nothing like him in that regard. Their tolerance of him remains a mystery to me.

158. IPT [REDACTED] taught me some rugby in my Transitus year and I recall his lesson on tackling in which he put much emphasis on the need to hurt the opposition as much as possible and for one's head to make contact with the other boy's bottom. It happens that I enjoyed that particular rugby lesson which was taught in a nurturing style. That is ironic, as he was the only person to teach me rugby without constant beasting, apart from Tom Smith, but his style was familiar and suggestive. He was like that with all the younger boys all the time in a way that is horrifying, [REDACTED] with some of those boys.
159. I recall on another occasion in my early years that he asked me if I knew what a "screw" was. While I was familiar with sexual intercourse in a theoretical sense, I was embarrassed to talk about it and I tried to change the subject. With hindsight, no other teacher behaved in a way that was even close to this.
160. Mr IPT [REDACTED] had apparently run the school sex education at some point and I heard a pupil a little older than me ask him whether he would be running it in their year. Mr IPT [REDACTED] appeared uncomfortable and uncharacteristically reluctant to discuss the matter. I consider that IPT [REDACTED]'s sex education lessons would have been very undisciplined, as his classes and activities could also be, and I wondered at the time if this responsibility was taken from him as he was considered unsound.

Bullying at Keil School

161. From about my final couple of years at Keil and up to the present day I have developed a growing awareness that I had seen the back end of a culture of pretty widespread bullying, which was not something I had seen at Knoxland and which explained quite a lot. The bullying I was aware of in my time was almost exclusively verbal, but was quite frequent and initially the tough culture at Keil would be more tolerant of that than I think was common even at the time. Some of the pupils would behave as though violence was a solution to things, but that would not be formally tolerated in my time and was fading fast in the first couple of years. There was not an awful lot of 'abusive' bullying and the once or twice I was aware of it, it was dealt with. Generally though, it was a really tough environment at Keil and one that we would not tolerate now. I think

Keil became really quite a good place by the time I left, for me that is complicated by my more senior position in the school, but I think the younger pupils were being much better treated by that time too.

162. There had been a tradition in the rugby team of whenever anybody earned their 1st XV socks, the socks were thrown into the roof of the gym and you had to fight your way out from under lots of people to get them, though I had no personal experience as it was part of rugby culture. I was not quite clear how much of that was still being applied when I was at school, though I do believe I saw it at least once or twice. I can see that a ruck on the rugby pitch is not that far removed from that sort of behaviour and we generally had a culture that this sort of behaviour was acceptable.
163. I also recall one particular rugby practice where a boy in my year decided to use his considerable bulk to hurt me in order to address some dislike he had of me. Such behaviour could hardly be challenged on the rugby pitch, where hurting people appeared to be encouraged.
164. After some event, a boy had ended up in hospital with an injured knee and the following day at assembly John McMurtrie made it very clear that he did not find it acceptable, he reacted much more strongly than I might have expected. At the time, I did not particularly see the event as anything out of the ordinary, although I would be appalled if I heard that was happening in a school now.
165. I think CGC [REDACTED] turned the direction from a bullying culture that existed before I started into an academic and participation culture, however I think it was a long-term approach. When I started, there were some older pupils who I considered to be animals and I made efforts to avoid them. When I was eleven or twelve years old, I accidentally tripped over a 5th or 6th year boarder who was lying on the lawn. The look he gave me was vicious and he kicked out at me with what I believe to be steel toe-capped boots, but I moved out of the way.
166. CGC [REDACTED] seems to have abolished the attitude that rugby was more important than anything and he seemed to have stopped the staff, let alone the pupils, from

bullying pupils. After my first term, Mr CGC gave an assembly in which he said that he was “pleading” with the parents of my classmate [REDACTED] to allow her to return to the school. He made clear his view on the bullying that she had experienced.

167. John Cummings actually introduced anti-bullying initiatives, including some sort of anti-bullying forum, right at the end of my time at Keil, I remember one pupil worked with him on, I think, one-to-one sessions. I was sceptical because I did not think it was possible to write policy to avoid bullying. I think this was about changing the culture, being seen to do something and getting the message across that bullying would not be tolerated. That was the first steps towards the culture I now see in schools.
168. My year had a boy who I considered a terrible bully called [REDACTED] and I watched as the school slowly, in my view, moved towards the necessary expulsion which I saw as a personal relief. I understood at the time that John Whyte, a history teacher and his housemaster, made [REDACTED] cry in a public shouting-down shortly before the expulsion. I long considered that to have been one of the finest moments of safeguarding, of everyone else, from my time at Keil, but I am now confused about the humiliation of [REDACTED] and the criticism that might be levelled at John Whyte who would now act quite differently.
169. In 1997 an episode of the Scottish TV series ‘Taggart’ was filmed at Loretto and Keil and the episode featured bullying at a Scottish boarding school. Tom Smith indicated that he wanted Keil to be credited as he said that Keil had nothing to hide in terms of bullying. Mr Smith claimed that Loretto were unhappy being associated with bullying in schools and had asked not to be credited, and as the senior participant they had the veto on the credit for both schools.
170. I thought at the time that Tom Smith was a bit optimistic proclaiming there was no bullying at Keil. There was nothing like the ritualistic bullying that might have been shown on the television, but we did have unkindness that at the time I thought should be a concern to prospective parents.

171. At the time I thought this could not be dealt with as I could not understand how a child could be forced not to bully somebody else, or forced to be kind in a common room. The message I now take from Tom Smith's positivity about the culture in his discussion with me, and I am sure I was not the only one he told it to, was how he wanted the school portrayed, because by doing that the culture would change. I think that was genuinely the ethos he and John Cummings were going after and they knew that they were making progress. However, they did not go about it anything like as proactively, as they do now.

Reporting of abuse at Keil School

172. The school, I think, had a culture of 'having a quiet word' coupled with 'least said, soonest mended' for things that we would now consider abuse, but at the time they would consider having no lasting harm.
173. One of my contemporaries as a senior pupil mentioned observing the head of the cleaning staff masturbating at work and it was clear to me that the school considered that the pupil needed to stop saying something they could not prove. I was made to understand that if I repeated this, which was hearsay from my perspective, I would be in trouble.
174. There was no appetite for me telling any of the teachers that CDK behaved in a way I found inappropriate. Nobody wanted to talk about it and my general impression was that their attitude was that no harm had been done and I should move on.
175. I did directly observe the parent of one girl hit another girl on the bottom with their umbrella to usher her out of a classroom. I turned to the teacher Sarah Guy who I had been talking to when the parent came in and she immediately said she had to go and went to protect the pupil. I know she very quickly sought support from the headmaster, John Cummings, which was immediately provided. I knew it had been dealt with seriously, but as was the culture, I was left aware that it had nothing to do with me and nobody would discuss it with me further.

Leaving Keil School

176. I left Keil School in 1998, after I had turned eighteen, and I went straight to Glasgow University. I got an unconditional offer after my 5th year, but I stayed for 6th year because I liked the school and 6th year would provide unparalleled opportunities. I believe I was right to stay on and I was sorry to leave. I thought it had been a brilliant experience being a deputy chief and I enjoyed being allowed to do things that I have only done at work relatively recently.
177. There had always been a career's master at Keil and around 4th year we were brought in for a test that was run by an external company that gave some indications of aptitudes and interests. There had also been work experience opportunities which the school put a lot of effort into, and we went to a careers fair once. I talked to a careers advisor about my options, although I was quite clear that I wanted to go to university and would decide on my career path after that, so I did not make best use of the service. I had a friend who was given a great deal of one-to-one support towards a military career and I am sure I would have had a similar experience towards my interests if I had needed it.

Life after Keil School

178. Since leaving university in 2003 I have been employed in a high hazard, highly regulated, chemicals industry. Phrases such as "what is the worst thing that can happen" and "think what-if, not if-only" are key and resonate with me when I think of how abuse could have occurred at Keil. I have been a line manager for the past eight years, during which time I have managed around forty individuals.
179. I am now married and a parent of school aged children.

Impact

180. Keil was hard sometimes and I do not think it needed to be so hard. It broke some people or left them pleased to leave, however I found it a positive experience that

opened up many more opportunities than I would otherwise have had. Keil at that time tried to be what CGC was saying it was going to be before I started and it generally succeeded.

181. I am more of a manager than a scientist now and I utilise all the skills I learnt because I was at Keil, such as fundamentals of leadership and how process and people problems should be approached. On average, I do not think I saw that learning so early in people I knew from other schools. I found the transferable skills that Glasgow University considered they needed to teach trivial in comparison to my experience at Keil.
182. All of my oldest friends come from Keil and I do not think that is all that different from many others who went there.

Records

183. I've kept just about everything from my time at Keil and when my mum moved out of her house I took everything she had. I have provided the Inquiry with copies of 'Keil School Prospectus' and 'Keil School Magazine 1994 – 1995', both from the records I have kept.
184. The prospectus is from about the time I was there onwards and I thought it was more or less accurate, although the school was a bit less organised than it looked in that document. The magazine pulls out all the positive stuff, but all its claims about the various successes are true and it is generally a fair reflection, certainly of the amount of things that were done.

Evidence heard by the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

185. I have no intention of using my own circumstantial evidence to negate personal recollections of abuse. However, I feel that the circumstantial evidence presented to the Inquiry is very unfair to some of the individuals that I knew and paints an incomplete picture of the school.

186. I was vaguely aware of the complaint made against QTW [REDACTED] which I considered implausible in a way that I never found [REDACTED] accusations against IPT [REDACTED] implausible.
187. Mr QTW [REDACTED]'s own submission forms a picture entirely consistent with the man I knew, he might have acted in a manner we would now consider lacking caution. From time-to-time he would do things such as tickling my chest which I considered was a successful attempt to create a friendly relationship that did not infringe on his authority as teacher but were consistent with the kind environment I would expect in a primary classroom.
188. Similar behaviour was not unknown with female primary teachers at Knoxland and is not unknown at [REDACTED] primary school. I distinctly recall Mr QTW [REDACTED] using a toilet cubicle on an excursion, which I noted seemed to be the safeguarding of the day and he never did anything I now consider inappropriate. His statement in his evidence that a child's accusations should be taken seriously is something he would have said to me in the 1990's and I think I may have first heard that sort of thinking from him as he demonstrated the most modern concept of child welfare in the school at that time. I am not in a position to listen to the child in this case, but Mr QTW [REDACTED]'s explanation is consistent with how he behaved in my experience.
189. In my opinion John Cummings' evidence to the inquiry was closer to my recollection when talking about strategy than when talking about detail. He concurred with Lady Smith that it was unwise to appoint Adrienne Smith and Anne Pack as housemothers when their sons were in the houses. Mrs Smith and Mrs Pack were boarding house staff and both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were day boys so they were not in those houses, and their appointment as housemothers cannot have happened long before those boys left the school, if there was any overlap at all. I believe he would have better represented the school by explaining that this model for House Mothers, the willingness of teachers sending their own children to the school, and that these things were managed without complaint, were all strengths of a close-knit community.

190. However, the details of advancement in behind the scenes matters that Mr Cummings paints under his supervision is consistent with my recollection, though we would never have considered that he was driving it.
191. The inquiry heard that the Keil of the 1990's was a one-man-band run on a shoestring that employed its pupils to carry out domestic tasks in order to save money. It heard that school accommodation was, at best, basic and the food was terrible. The inquiry heard that Keil only had a small number of dedicated staff who were overwhelmed.
192. I do not recognise this bleak assessment and I recall a school that attracted enormous affection amongst the staff and many of its pupils. In times gone past, those staff and pupils would have rallied round to explain the success of the school, but I believe that IPT [REDACTED]. I think there would have been a lot of denial [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I hope I have demonstrated that I saw many faults, and that gives credibility to my ultimate conclusion that the school had more strengths.
193. The accommodation may well have been basic by today's standards, but it did not compare so badly to my grandmother's council house with no shower and one gas fire. The laboratories compared well to the teaching labs at university, the IT room contained equipment I had never seen at that time. We used to put eighteen people in a minibus with sixteen seats, but most parents at the time put four of us in the back of the car while they were strapped in at the front. If Mason House was the worst of the boarding accommodation, as stated by John Cummings in his evidence to the Inquiry, then it was the house that was shown to prospective pupils and parents who then chose the school in full knowledge.
194. I was disappointed that the best that some of the staff witnesses could do was suggest that they tried their best at Keil against dreadful odds. They did not represent the extent to which they succeeded in delivering their mission, and that there was a generally consistent high standard against that mission. Keil was not the school with its own squash courts and swimming pool, but nor was Dumbarton Academy. Keil did not have en-suite dorm rooms with private televisions, but nor did Glasgow University.

Keil was not luxurious and Keil may have been financially unviable, but it was only in the changing staff demographic and maintenance budget that that latter showed.

195. Apart from its immense range of pastimes, Keil had a relatively limited scope and outside of that core scope, it accepted trying hard over high standards - from pupils and staff. Its non-academic administration could be amateurish. It was perhaps rather niche, but it succeeded within that niche; it aimed to be a small community, and it achieved that. Through the 1990's, Keil School normally felt like a good school, academically competitive, with better extra-curricular experiences than at least some of the alternatives. Its small size, and lack of elitism, was an opportunity to get involved. It felt as though it had a dedicated, and latterly caring, staff and almost universally I think that was true. While the teachers were in charge, we felt part of the community and continued to do so on leaving.
196. Perhaps there was no future for a model which could not keep up with the modern world; but it felt like a small, unique, generally successful school that makes more sense when you realise it did not have enough money and might have been reinventing itself.
197. Whatever the reasons, Keil was unable to balance the books and it closed. Many of us considered that a great loss. I do not know what conclusions to draw about the school beyond my own overall positive experience, and an acceptance that it fell far short of modern standards. But I do want to advise against drawing the wrong conclusions on the serious matter of child abuse at the school that the Inquiry is addressing; the presence of tinned spaghetti for tea once in 1991, as mentioned in some of the more memorable evidence, does not represent the school and so cannot provide a golden-thread to understanding the complex issues of how child abuse was able to occur.
198. The submissions the Inquiry saw were generally focused only on safeguarding [REDACTED] [REDACTED] IPT [REDACTED] The other submissions felt to me to be overwhelmed by a few recollections of school life. I do not think that Tom Smith would ever be the person to see the negatives in anything and so he is bound to be

optimistic, but the submissions from the Smiths was the closest I read to the right summary of the Keil of the 1990's. Provided, that is, the context is understood to be about the general experience of the school community, and that this was certainly not without exception.

199. I considered the well-intentioned and factual, but out of context, trivia I perceived in the submissions to be a distraction from the work of the Inquiry. More worryingly some of the evidence even seemed to play out personal issues amongst staff, and was somewhat at odds with behaviour I witnessed. It would be wrong if the reputation of the school, and so much more so, some key members of staff who dedicated their lives to the school, were left to that sort of evidence.
200. The evidence left me with an overwhelming feeling of unbalanced criticism of individuals and that I should add my differing experiences even if it would be easier to stay quiet on difficult subjects. I consider it the single, most fundamental, lesson from Keil that I should speak up.
201. I think the case has been made by others around the historic culture of bullying and CGC [REDACTED] probably addressed that, but probably took the path of least resistance playing the long game in rectifying it. How the culture developed, CGC [REDACTED]'s reasons for addressing it, and the compromises he accepted, are worthy of investigation. In respect to bullying, Keil was as improving place during my early years, and I believe that John Cummings and Tom Smith were on the right side of history.
202. The structure of the school made little attempt to address structured, failsafe, safeguarding in those pre-Saville days, but the question in my mind is how far behind other schools were they? I do not think there is any doubt that safeguarding at Keil School was not up to modern standards, but I believe that 'Getting-it-right-for-every-child' had not been invented, and standards elsewhere that I experienced were not all that different.
203. Sexual abuse at Keil appears to be limited to IPT [REDACTED]. From what I have read, and insofar as my own experience is relevant, it seems that nobody considered IPT [REDACTED].

IPT's pattern of abuse as a risk, he says that, and every other response is consistent. Shocking and terrible as it was, it makes sense having known **IPT**, and in a post-Saville world, and having read **IPT**'s own account.

204. Only that single report in the headmaster's study indicates knowing negligence. In principle, my experience of the Keil culture is that it would be credible that there was a cover-up to avoid catastrophic fall-out and it would be credible that there was an assumption of innocence. For reports of bullying I would be easily convinced. However, for sexual abuse, that is the most terrible negligence, far beyond anything that was given in evidence of that period and quite the opposite of the way serious matters were handled in my experience. I find it hard to construct a credible scenario for such a tolerance of criminal activity and questions about how the parents were convinced to walk away seem very relevant.
205. It is a serious accusation to suggest that Tom Smith was present at that meeting, and allowed **IPT** to remain in a position where he could sexually abuse boys, under his nose, for several years, close to his wife and son. There seems to be no suggestion that doing so would have been anything but a risk to him. One can see the importance of the question, but it is disturbing to extrapolate one report into a conclusion that he could have ignored these terrible crimes, and it would be disgraceful to do so on the basis of the further evidence given with a clear personal grudge. I knew a Mr Smith who's record of trying to do the right thing for his pupils was so strong that it would take a discovery of this magnitude to damage it; I would expect much, much more detail in the evidence before I would consider this to be such a discovery.


Lessons to be learned

206. I was wrong about bullying; John Cummings was on exactly the right track with his initiatives, and what we thought was great improvement was really just the start. Discipline is not as effective as a mix of techniques and, above all, openness. This has been successful in some places, should be extended to all places, and must continue to evolve.

207. I will not hear any criticism of the institution of chiefs and deputies, but I would acknowledge that it was an institution that may have been abused and far stronger structures would now be needed to eradicate such risk when giving pupils similar authority.
208. I am apprehensive about commenting on sexual abuse that I do not know anything about, but building a picture of the time is limited to what is submitted. While things that happened in the past cannot be fixed, we can be honest about them and we can record them. That way we can learn from them. So either blaming, or justifying, Keil is not the goal, working out why it could not happen now is.
209. I was quite negative towards the school when I became aware of the sexual abuse. I thought it was down to the amateurism, secrecy and over-confidence of Keil that they had let it happen. I could not understand how it could have gone on and nobody saw it. I then read the evidence to the Inquiry, including from IPT [REDACTED].
210. I recognised the staff that I knew from Keil and that they were the good people I had known, and I believed them when they said that they were utterly confounded by something they did not think could happen. I am not sure that all the money in the world would have made a difference to that.
211. There needed to be some structure in place to guide and protect the staff so they could protect the children. These days there are policies in place to ensure a teacher reports even a hint of a suspicion of abuse and that is the only way to be careful enough. We cannot protect kids from things they do not tell us, so now we make it normal to bring into the open these things. I think the lessons have probably already been learned, but those lessons also have to continue to evolve.

Other information

212. 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..... 20 March 2023