

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Emily Margaret BANKS

Support person present: No

1. My name is Emily Banks and my maiden name was [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1984. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Family Life

2. My parents are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] They are both still alive as far as I know but I have had no contact with them since 2011. Prior to 2011 I had gone through therapy for anxiety, depression and eating disorders as a result of trauma and self-harm which I started at Fettes. I had a conversation with my mum in September 2011 and realised it was healthier for me not to have contact with them. I had tried over the years to sort things out with my mum but by 2011 I realised that things weren't going to move forward with her. I have had various letters from them over the years but I've requested that they stop that as well.
3. I have a sister called [REDACTED] though she's more commonly known as [REDACTED] She is four years older than me and now has the surname [REDACTED] I have a sister called [REDACTED] who is two years older than me and has since changed her surname by deed poll to [REDACTED] My brother [REDACTED] is more commonly known as [REDACTED] and was born in 1987. He has retained the surname of [REDACTED]
4. I always felt there was particular pressure on me from my parents to do well academically. When I started at Fettes I was not in a good way and, looking back, that was when my depression and anxiety started. My siblings were all on Seroxat which

was an anti-depressant. I was not in a good place due to the fact I was moving to Fettes. Firstly, this meant I would get no respite from home because not only did my parents teach there but I lived there. Also, being a student in Fettes brought upon you its own academic and social pressures. A combination of these things added to emotional distress.

5. When I was born my dad was a [REDACTED] teacher at Fettes and we lived in a school house off campus. When I was 18 months old he became a head of department and we moved into [REDACTED], a house on campus. When I was three years old he became housemaster of [REDACTED] one of the four boys' boarding houses in Fettes, and we moved into that house where we stayed until I was fourteen.
6. I went to primary school at Flora Stevenson School, in Edinburgh, which was fine. I then went to Cargilfield Prep School in Crammond as a day pupil (though they did have boarders) and I benefited from being away from the family which was good but I always knew that I would be going to Fettes at thirteen. I didn't want to go to Fettes for the reasons I've mentioned above, but it wasn't an option. At sixteen I looked into going to Leith Academy as I had had enough of both Fettes and my parents but my parents wouldn't allow it. At that time of my life my parents had complete control of my life and I wasn't in a position to question any decision made by them.
7. My mum's dad stayed in [REDACTED] nearby and regularly came and looked after us and my times with him are good memories. As teenagers things were bad in our family. My sisters had severe depression and I developed an eating disorder when I was twelve. My brother had severe depression as an eleven year old.
8. We all went to Flora Stevenson Primary School then my sister [REDACTED] started in Inverleith House, Fettes, at the age of eleven. [REDACTED] joined in the following year. In the same year, 1992, I started school in Primary four in Cargilfield Prep School, Crammond. I eventually left there in July 1997. My brother [REDACTED] also went to that school. When I eventually moved to Fettes College he moved to Inverleith House at the same time which meant by 1997 we were all at the same school, Fettes. Things

were always tense at home, it was not a good environment and none of us were happy there.

Fettes College

9. In Fettes I was in College East and my house mistress was Pippa Donald. I started at Fettes in September 1997 and was there until July 2002. I wasn't a boarder as such which meant while I lived in [REDACTED] with my parents I attended school at College East. I would attend for lunch in the dining room in the which was a separate building in Fettes though would rarely eat and would return home as late as possible. I would have said that there were about ten or fifteen day pupils in College East who weren't boarders.
10. There were four residential boys' houses which were Glencourse House, Mordoun House, Carrington House and Kimmerghan House. There were about sixty boys residing in these houses aged from thirteen to eighteen. These were the areas where the boys slept, studied and had their down time. These houses were all stand-alone buildings away from the main building and our house, [REDACTED] was about [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
11. [REDACTED]
12. There was also a girls' house called Arniston House, which stood alone, as well as College East and College West, both also all-girls schools, which were within the main building.
13. Initially Fettes was for thirteen to eighteen year olds but then Inverleith House was developed for eleven to thirteen year olds sometime in the late 80's or early 90's. I know now, as an adult, that the boarding age actually started at eight years old. It now caters for both boys and girls.

14. In the main building there was a call-over hall used for meetings. Also on the ground floor were classrooms. There was then a staircase that only the adults used which led up to a chapel. On the first floor were more classrooms while girls' accommodations were on the second and third floor. The gym hall was in a separate building with music block and art block with further classrooms. There was also a separate swimming pool.
15. There was no pressure put on non-boarders to become boarders but they were still expected to be there as much as the boarders. So, for example, if there was something arranged to be on in the evening the non-boarders would be expected to be there. This would be things like concerts, different talks, different groups, debating groups or drama rehearsals.
16. Boarders would also do prep from 7:30 pm till 9:00 pm and I would often stay at school for that. Non-boarders didn't have to attend at these prep sessions but would be expected to do the same work at home. There were also classes on a Saturday. Basically, there were no allowances for the non-boarders and they were treated just the same as boarders.
17. Ordinarily I would not have had much contact with the boys at Fettes but mum took the job as [REDACTED] there when we were quite young and spent most of her time there so we didn't see her much. Me and my sisters would go through to the main building to see her and help her with [REDACTED] before term time started. [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] originally but died suddenly. My mum took the job part-time but eventually took the job full-time. I think she started part-time in 1988 and became full-time in 1990 or 1991.
18. My mum had been a primary teacher before she met my dad and had a Dip Ed which was an old qualification. After being the [REDACTED] she started as a [REDACTED] roll which is [REDACTED] teaching kids who would [REDACTED] [REDACTED] They would be boarders in Fettes that would have no [REDACTED] but still have to take part in the curriculum so my mum would teach them [REDACTED] in our home.

19. Years later, sometime around 2000, my mum got a job at Fettes teaching [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and maybe even [REDACTED] to the younger students. Laterally, sometime in 2003 she was the house mistress for the junior girls boarding in [REDACTED]
20. The boys had their own coded entrance to [REDACTED] Through that entrance, to the right, were study rooms for the fourteen and fifteen year olds as well as a kitchen and cooker for toast and snacks. Upstairs had the same layout. To the left of the entrance was a games room, more study rooms and a common room.
21. There was also a flat at the back of [REDACTED] which was for the resident tutor who was usually a single guy, a teacher, who would cover for my dad one night a week. His name was EXM [REDACTED] who was also my [REDACTED] teacher. Upstairs on the top floor was a dorm for youngsters with between six and ten boys who had their study downstairs. The older boys had double rooms with a desk each while in their last year they had single rooms. The boys would have breakfast, tea and lunch in the dinner hall but had facilities to make snacks in their common rooms.
22. Sometimes, before we started at Fettes, the older boys would baby-sit us by doing their homework at the dining table while we were in bed. If the boys were unwell they would come to our door and we would fetch our mother. On their birthdays my mum would make cakes and snacks for them in our kitchen and maybe about twenty boys would be there.

Routine at Fettes College

23. When I was at Fettes we would be at the chapel for 8:30 am, be there for twenty minutes and then go to school where we would stay till lunch. The chaplain took the service and also taught religion at the school. A Religious Education GCE was compulsory. There was also a church service on a Sunday evening which the boarders were required to attend. The non-boarders only had to attend this if they were in the chapel choir. While at chapel the headmaster would make any announcements he had to make.

On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays we would finish lessons about 1:00 pm and the afternoons were all about organised sports, which was compulsory, while the other days were all about lessons. On Monday's, Wednesdays and Fridays we would also do sports but would return for more classes afterwards.

24. As a boarder you could leave the campus after school but had to be back for about 7:30 pm for checks and you needed permission to go off campus. The sixth form could go out on a Saturday night but had to be back for a certain time and could lose this privilege if they had been gated.

Mealtimes/Food

25. The food was alright. While I was at Cargilfield I was still eating properly and the food there was good. Cargilfield was similarly structured to Fettes but it was more nurturing and I was happier there. I had started to develop the anorexic thought process while at Cargilfield but didn't start restricting my food intake until I started at Fettes. This was because of the increased pressures of being at Fettes and the fact I was getting no respite from home. The staff were really friendly and I didn't feel so much under pressure there. In fairness, that might have been because I wasn't living there.

Clothing/uniform

26. The girls wore a kilt and we could choose the length of it. You were allowed between mid-knee and mid-calf. We wore a flat neck shirt with a jumper and flat shoes. We wore our hair tied back with no make-up or nail varnish. The wearing of the uniform was pretty strict and you could be gated if they didn't approve of how you wore it, the school equivalent of being grounded.
27. The boys wore dark trousers with white shirts and a short black blazer or a school blazer. If they were in formal uniform they could wear a kilt with the school tartan with a school or house tie. For sports kit the boys had rugby shirts while the girls wore pink sweatshirts with the school badge.

Trips and holidays

28. We did the Duke of Edinburgh awards with hikes and camping trips organised by the older students for younger ones. We went all over Scotland and the Lake District with the Cadet Force. There were also lots of sports tours where we played other schools which included going abroad.

School

29. The workload at Fettes was heavy and the time-table was really full. Some of the education was very good while some was not so good. I think it was a case of hit or miss and depended on who taught you. I think the teachers were badly vetted with some of them not having the proper degrees. I know this because, when the school lists the names of staff, they put the qualifications after the names. It's therefore easy to see which ones don't have the proper qualifications. An example of this was that my mum only had a minor teaching qualification with no degree while my dad had no teaching qualification though he did have a BA degree from Cambridge

Birthdays and Christmas

30. The boarders all went home for Christmas.

Visits/Inspections

31. I was not aware of any official inspections at Fettes but I know there was at least one at Cargilfield. I remember the headmaster Alan Bateman telling us about it after the inspection took place. He said that overall they were impressed with the way the school was run. They said that the rules of the school were not written down anywhere but the pupils knew what they were.

Abuse at Fettes College

32. There was a lot of bullying in Fettes with no support given to the children who suffered. There was nowhere for the children to speak about their problems. I was bullied verbally, mainly name-calling, about weight that I didn't actually have. I think they just wanted a reaction from me though I think my sisters were both bullied far more than I was. I was bullied by my peers but didn't really see it as a problem as I was bullied worse by my sister at home.

Prefects

33. School prefects were appointed by a Senior Management team. In houses you automatically became a house-prefect in your final year. Prefects would be given a year group to look after and they would do things with them like take them out to the cinema and would also be available for the younger children to talk to. I do recall that there was a prefect available for me to speak to but I never did speak to her.
34. When I started in Fettes in 3rd form, I would be thirteen and 3rd Form would be the equivalent of third year. Those in that year did as they were told by the prefects, just wee jobs like collecting things or answering the phone for them. In my sister [REDACTED]'s and [REDACTED] (a boy in my sister's year) time as younger pupils they were treated dreadfully and treated like lackeys even though, officially, prefects were encouraged to bring things to the attention of staff. I knew this because I would hear my sister and the boys who came to our house talking about the way they were treated. I would say that unofficially they were treated like fags i.e. servants.
35. I don't recall any initiation ceremonies. The boys in our year got bullied and made to do whatever the older boys said like early morning runs, cold showers or polishing their shoes. I always thought there were fewer opportunities for the boys to report things. I say this because there was always an unwritten law of not reporting things and just getting on with it.

Alan Wilson

36. When I was four, five and six years old we went as a family to Buncrew House, a hotel near Inverness. A man called Alan Wilson owned the hotel and was also the guardian for [REDACTED] who attended Fettes and was five years older than me. His dad had died and his mum, [REDACTED] appointed Alan Wilson as his guardian. When his mum then died, when I was about six, [REDACTED] went to stay with Alan.
37. Alan Wilson would close the hotel at Christmas when he invited a lot of us to stay there. He didn't charge us any money. In 2009 Alan was arrested and sentenced for sexually abusing boys, one of whom was [REDACTED] as well as other boys who had attended at Fettes, one of whom was called [REDACTED] I knew about this as it was reported in the Inverness Chronicle and my brother was concerned because a lot of the opportunistic attacks had taken place at swimming pools across the country and he had been to one of these pools in Edinburgh with Wilson.
38. Alan Wilson had access to Fettes College as a guardian of one of the boys. He was also a friend of our parents and would come to our house and appeared there often. I would have said he was a trusted family friend and I never had any concerns about him. I considered him almost like an uncle. I was shocked when I heard what he had been convicted of and realised he had had unfettered access to the boys.
39. Alan Wilson used to take the children swimming including taking my brother [REDACTED] to Waterworld in Leith. It was just the two of them and while my brother has no memory of this he was concerned when he found out what Alan Wilson was convicted of. Alan had been a scout leader and a patron of a charity who took care of children who came over from Chernobyl. After 2002 I was training to be a teacher and would visit my mum. Alan Wilson was still there regularly and my mum facilitated the use of Westwood Swimming Pool, which is now used by those in Fettes, for Alan Wilson to take the kids.
40. My main concern, looking back, was about my wee brother [REDACTED] who Alan Wilson would take swimming and to see a tractor. Alan Wilson had a friend who used to go

with him and who I only knew as [REDACTED] who was tall with a high voice. I only ever saw him when we were in Inverness.

41. When we were young [REDACTED] and I were in the car once with Alan and [REDACTED] in Inverness when [REDACTED] got angry with [REDACTED] because he had sat on a cake or a muffin or something like that. I have no idea why we were in the car that day but it always worried me that there was no mention in the press of [REDACTED] when Alan Wilson was arrested. Alan was a very charismatic man who people took to and wouldn't worry about their children being in his company and that worries me that there might have been more than he was convicted of.
42. I think Alan Wilson pled guilty to three charges of Sexual Assault but was found guilty of all fifteen charges which concerned boys between eight or nine up to teenagers. I assume he was convicted in Inverness Sheriff Court and I think he was given between three and four years.
43. Alan Wilson was ages with my parents and would perhaps be in his 70's now. At the time I think it was only [REDACTED] that he took swimming but it's possible he took others. My recall is that he was regularly at [REDACTED] where my dad was the housemaster from 1988 to 1998 after which my dad was simply a teacher and we moved to [REDACTED] which was also owned by the school.
44. My concern is that, since Alan Wilson was still in touch with my parents even after [REDACTED] left the school, that my mum facilitated him being able to bring the boys and girls from Chernobyl to the swimming pool. My parents aren't the easiest to talk to at the best of times but I recall when the news about Alan Wilson broke they were very odd. They said they had been approached by the police and my dad said they were simply asking for a character reference for him but that didn't sound right. The police wouldn't do that and I thought it very odd.
45. I assume Alan Wilson must have had a place in Edinburgh but, if he did, I never visited it. I think we saw him about once a month.

Bill Stein

46. As a small child we knew a man called Bill Stein who was in charge of the swimming pool at Fettes. He was always there and I recall him putting the floats out. When my sisters were at Fettes and I was still at Cargilfield, in the mid 90's, I remember there were allegations against him about indecent behaviour against the girls when they were swimming. BPR [REDACTED] DFU [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were about twelve or thirteen at the time, peers of my sister [REDACTED] and made a complaint about him to CXL [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]s wee sister was my friend which is how I knew about the complaint. Their parents complained on their behalf to the school.
47. I don't recall if the police were involved or if the police said there was no need for their involvement or if the school investigated it and found no case to answer. My dad said that BPR [REDACTED]s mum, QWH [REDACTED] was just vindictive against the school and was just making up the allegations. I knew of her involvement as I heard my parents talk about her and they clearly didn't like her.
48. I don't know what Bill Stein allegedly did other than it may have been of a sexual nature. I'd say it was BPR [REDACTED]s mum who was making the complaint as [REDACTED]s parents were very private and would not have made a complaint. I don't know how old Bill Stein was but he was definitely older than my parents. He was a swimming teacher, a big man and seemed to have muscular problems in his face, maybe after a stroke. He was no longer there when I was at Fettes and I don't know if he left because of the allegations.

Katherine Cecil

49. Another thing I would like to mention that was strange concerns a residential sports or science teacher called Katherine Cecil who had no hair. She lived in College East when I was there. The children were told that she had leukaemia but a few years later it was discovered that she was fine and had made it all up. I don't know what happened to her after she left.

50. A family called MacDonald stayed nearby and had put her up and helped her out financially while the school had given her a lot of time off. My parents never spoke of her and never spoke ill of the school. There was no support given to any of the children who had been affected by her behaviour. I wasn't one of these pupils though they were peers of mine. They had had Katherine Cecil as their pastoral carer (tutor) but then had to deal with the fact that they had been concerned for her for no reason.

Anthony Chenevix-Trench

51. [REDACTED] Anthony Chenevix-Trench was a house master. My dad went to Cambridge and got a degree in [REDACTED]. He then got a postcard from Chenevix-Trench who invited my dad to teach [REDACTED] in Fettes even though my dad wasn't a qualified teacher. Both he and my mum moved to Fettes about 1976 and that was my dad with a job for life. I didn't know a lot about Chenevix-Trench but I know he had a reputation of being sadistic though my dad got on well with him. I think it was my dad who said that he was a brutal man but that was the sort of thing my dad just went along with.
52. When my mum and dad started at Fettes it was about that time that girls started attending there, sixth form only at first, and the girls would stay with people like my mum and dad.
53. I have my own concerns about my dad and his family. His dad was an RAF vicar and worked closely with the Bishop in Chichester who has since been convicted of child abuse crimes. My uncle told me that this Bishop and others set up a charity that would take young boys away for a year and it was during these trips that many boys were abused. I don't know if my dad was involved but he lies and is emotionally vindictive, not easy to approach about things.
54. In his pastoral role as a house master I think my dad would have been awful but I doubt if he ever abused or hurt a boy though he did say some inappropriate things to girls. My parents had the pastoral care for a lot of children at Fettes and I don't think

they were fit for that job. I say this because their emotional and psychological abuse of their own children did not make them appropriate adults to care for the children of others.

Reporting of abuse at Fettes College

55. I had a tutor who I spoke to when I first went to Fettes called Pippa Donald. She asked me about why I was struggling with my school work and I told her I had difficulty sleeping at home because of my sister. However, she spoke to my parents but that didn't go well and just made things worse for me at home. That tutor would have been the only person I could have spoken to.

Leaving Fettes College

56. Both my sisters had a lot of time off school because they were unwell. To finish off her schooling my sister [REDACTED] went to Chichester to stay with my grandparents then did Highers at Broughton. [REDACTED] was particularly unwell and was suicidal at sixteen or seventeen. [REDACTED] was quite abusive to me so it was good that she was away but it was stressful knowing she would be coming back. [REDACTED] did two Highers at Telford then left home. My parents would have preferred for her to stay at Fettes.
57. I finished 6th Form in 2002 with three A Levels, an AS Level and an O Level. I went to Exeter University and studied Spanish and TESOL which is "Teaching English as another language" before spending a year in Spain teaching English.
58. I then went back to Edinburgh working in admin here and there. I then did voluntary work in a primary then obtained a post-grad in teaching in primary schools. I started teaching in primary schools in Edinburgh.
59. I married in 2011 and had to give up work as a teacher in 2012 to become the full-time carer for my husband [REDACTED]

Impact

60. I have had counselling. When I first went to Exeter University it was the first time that I had been away from the school and away from my family and I crashed. My eating got really bad and I went to the University Counselling Service in my 2nd and 4th years. When I returned to Edinburgh I went to Crossreach and had a difficult time at work when I reported SNR [REDACTED] at New Craighall primary school in Edinburgh for bullying children.
61. I reported her on bullying both staff and children. This led to a hearing at the employment tribunal in an action against her, raised by me with the support of the EIS. The outcome of this was that the City of Edinburgh Council didn't let it go to a full tribunal. Instead, I was transferred to a new school to complete my probation and she was monitored in post.
62. I went on anti-depressants in 2015 and put on the waiting list to see a psychologist which I finished in 2018 after eighteen months of weekly sessions.
63. I see my GP and CPN at Craigmiller periodically and I'll be seeing him again in a couple of weeks. Counselling has been very helpful to me.

Reporting of Abuse

64. I have never made any reports of abuse at Fettes.

Lessons to be Learned

65. It is so important that children feel they can approach members of staff and be listened to so that their concerns can be taken forward. The pastoral role of teachers now is so different to what we had at Fettes. There are better procedures for protecting children and these are better used. That didn't happen to us but the use of such procedures can make a school stronger.

Other Comments

66. My experiences at Fettes College were on the whole negative. A huge part of this is as a result of how my parents treated me at home. However, once I started as a pupil in the school, my feelings of low self-worth were compounded by feeling I could not take this to any staff member for fear my parents would find out.
67. I found everyday stressful and routine activities and events in school caused me emotional distress because of the low self-worth I had. I grew up in a confusing, often emotionally abusive environment in which my family appeared to present in one way to the outside world but felt very different behind closed doors.
68. There were few boundaries placed between school and home life given my living environment, no boundaries in my home around personal space and freedom to express myself, and an overarching feeling of uncertainty about emotional and physical safety.
69. These feelings were not created by the staff and pupils at Fettes College, but the bullying behaviour of some pupils compounded these feelings. The inherent unspoken rule of not speaking out against the school or the staff compounded these feelings. I felt powerless and isolated.
70. 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.....

25/02/2020