

**FETTES COLLEGE – SCOTTISH CHILD ABUSE INQUIRY**

STATEMENT

OF

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## Introduction

1. I have been Head of Fettes College since June 2019; and I give evidence to the Inquiry in that capacity.
2. This statement, in discussing child protection at Fettes, does so under the following headings:
  - a. compliance, inspection, audit, self-evaluation, and self-assessment;
  - b. safeguarding – our thinking: the culture and ethos of the school;
  - c. our policies, including steps taken to audit our approach to child protection;
  - d. our safeguarding systems: a summary of the systems we have in place to provide child protection and the training we provide to staff;
  - e. the operational aspects of our systems and policies;
  - f. the curriculum: as to how it seeks to assist in the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils – essential in developing a counter-bullying culture and respect for all fellow students;
  - g. how we have responded to allegations of child abuse;
  - h. the future – issues and continuing development;
  - i. conclusion – concluding thoughts and observations.

## Listening to the Applicants' Evidence

3. Before discussing any of the above, I wish to begin by saying something of what the Applicants' evidence has meant to Fettes, and to me. It has been harrowing to hear of sexual, physical and emotional abuse at Fettes from those who have come to the Inquiry and those who have provided such accounts in statements. The school accepts and admits that such abuse has occurred. This is now part of its history; a part that the school must acknowledge. Everyone who has contributed has shown bravery in coming forward and I hope they know that I have listened very carefully to everything that they have said. I do believe that everyone in staff and governance at Fettes truly understands the importance of safeguarding but the deeply personal accounts the school has heard from Applicants provides a very real lesson as to the responsibility placed on the school. The evidence of the Applicants shows very clearly how what happens during one's school years has a huge impact on one's future. The Applicants show that the culture of a school is fundamentally important, and that such culture must actively nurture and foster respect. Everyone must have a 'voice'. Whilst I have always believed this, I have been thinking again, in the course of the last few days, about how we must ensure as best we can that every pupil can, and will, find someone they can talk to if this is ever needed. We can never be complacent about anything that relates to the wellbeing of the students in our care.
4. When the school gave an Opening Statement to the Inquiry in March, it made a full and unreserved apology to those who have suffered abuse whilst at Fettes. I renew that apology on behalf of the school. As the school recognised at the time of the Opening Statement, words of apology, of themselves, may have limited worth. I hope,

perhaps, that my evidence as to our current approach to safeguarding helps give substance to our apology: by explaining what we now do to look after our students; by offering our current practices and thinking and by inviting constructive criticism as a means of making constant improvements.

#### My Experience: my career with particular reference to safeguarding

5. It may assist the Inquiry to have some detail of my career to this point, with particular reference to the pastoral care and safeguarding of pupils. I have also attached my *curriculum vitae* to this Statement.
6. After reading Geography at the University of Cambridge, I completed a Post Graduate Certificate of Education in 1992, also at Cambridge. I taught Geography at Clifton College, Bristol from 1992 to 1996. I was a residential tutor in one of the boys' boarding houses (ages 13-18), and thus directly involved in the care for those boys. Throughout my career, I have chosen to be involved in residential roles.
7. I was then appointed a Teacher of Geography at Fettes in September 1996. I am registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.
8. At Fettes, I supported my husband in his role as Housemaster of Carrington House from 1999 to 2005, which is one of the boys' boarding houses. It housed 70 boys, aged between 13 and 18. As a residential member of the House team, I had a key pastoral role in the house, as well as undertaking tutor and matron duties. In such roles, one must always be available to provide the students with care and support in all possible ways.
9. As a teacher in a boarding school, I have been a tutor in both boys' and girls' houses. (I explain the role of tutor as that role operates at Fettes below; but in short can be defined as a 'champion of the pupil'.)
10. During our time in Carrington House, I took a break from teaching between 2002 and 2006, to look after our daughters. I returned to full-time teaching in September 2006 and was appointed Deputy Head of Fettes College in September 2007. I was promoted to Acting Head in June 2019 and confirmed in the post of Head in April 2020.
11. As Deputy Head, I had overall responsibility for pastoral care and safeguarding, as well as being in charge of the day-to-day running of the school. Between 2007 and 2012, I was Child Protection lead and then Assistant to the Child Protection Lead until 2014. Throughout my time as Deputy Head, I led the school through the Care Inspectorate inspections. During the course of my career, a constant feature has been the evolution and development, throughout the sector, of safeguarding within schools. Legislation, guidelines and good practice have evolved. It has been essential to be reflective and respond positively to all changes, whilst also listening carefully to the voice of the student. I discuss later ways in which Fettes seeks to canvass and implement the views of pupils.

12. Due to the growth of the school and the scope of the Deputy Head role, from 2014 we appointed a separate Head of Pastoral Care. This was a visible and practical commitment to the importance of this strand in school life. The Head of Pastoral Care then took on responsibility for the pastoral care of all pupils and became the Named Person. I retained responsibility for day-to-day running of the school and behaviour.
13. As Head, I am responsible for leadership of the school, its culture, ethos and strategic decisions. I have restructured the Senior Leadership Team this year, creating a role of Senior Deputy Head as well as Deputy Head (Academic) and Deputy Head (Pastoral), which was formerly the Head of Pastoral Care. This change allows the Deputy Head (Pastoral) more time for her role.
14. Pastoral care and the development of safeguarding policies has been central to my professional career. Taking over from my predecessor as Deputy Head, I built on the excellent work she had done in this area. I have ensured that I have regular Child Protection Training at the appropriate level each year, as well as completing annual Prevent training. I attach some details of pastoral courses I have attended in recent years as an appendix to this statement to show the type of professional development I have undertaken, such as for example becoming a Mental Health First Aider. I would emphasise that education and training in this area is a continuum and as a community, we strive to ensure that we are abreast of all developing issues, reflecting those in the school policies but more importantly in practice and ethos.

#### Tutors: the nature and purpose of that role at Fettes College

15. The role of tutor, as that role is performed at Fettes, is a fundamental aspect of the system of pastoral care provided for at Fettes; and I make reference to that role throughout my statement. Therefore, it may assist if I say a few words on the tutor system in this introductory section of my statement.
16. It is clear that the culture of a school is key to ensuring effective safeguarding processes. Throughout the applicants' evidence, the feeling that what they were experiencing was the norm, had to be endured and there was no point in reporting it was all-encompassing. This is something that we need to be proactive against at all times. We need every single person in the community to continually re-emphasise the safeguarding standards we expect and what to do if those standards are not met. A primary means of establishing and reinforcing that culture at Fettes is through our tutorial system. The tutor plays such a fundamental role in the life of each student that it may assist to explain it further in this introductory section,
17. The whole structure of the pastoral care is based on one-to-one tutorial sessions that are centred on the student. Every member of the teaching staff serves as a tutor while all students are part of a tutor group. The tutor is described, informally, as the 'champion of the student'. Each week, every student will have a one-to-one meeting with their designated tutor - depending on need, this may happen more frequently. The tutor is expected to listen and spend time getting to know their tutee as an individual. At those meetings, the tutor will discuss with the student academic progress, and wider

pastoral issues. This role used to be known as an 'academic tutor' but the word 'academic' has now been dropped as a more holistic awareness of the role has developed with the understanding that happy children flourish. The aim is to ensure that the student feels supported, is known, valued and their needs listened to. Tutors are expected to attend events and celebrate successes in as wide a range of activities as possible, as well as help with any issues or concerns. All tutors are Child Protection trained and know the proper safeguarding processes to follow with respect to wellbeing concerns and child protection disclosures. Strong relationships are developed, and students consistently value this unique relationship. In our 2019 pastoral survey conducted by external auditors, the student response was overwhelmingly positive. In one response, representative of wider responses as a whole, one child said: "the tutors are always there for you, the tutors are so supportive." Tutors liaise closely with House staff, Matrons, the Medical Centre and parents, but do so in accordance with our guidelines on confidentiality (part of our safeguarding training). Relevant information from tutorials is recorded using our software systems. (These are discussed below: general information will be recorded on House OneNote pages; any wellbeing or child protection concern is placed on iSAMS (our pastoral manager module, which is GIRFEC compliant). Tutors also deliver part of the Personal Social Education Programme (PSE), detailed below.

## Compliance – Inspections – Audit – Self-Evaluation – Self-Assessment

### Inspections

18. As the Inquiry is aware, schools are inspected by Education Scotland and as a residential care service also by the Care Inspectorate. The latter inspections are most relevant to the Inquiry's remit as their focus is on the residential care that we provide. These Inspections are detailed and centred around the experience of the students. Questionnaires are sent out to students, staff and parents. Whilst policies and processes are checked, the Inspectors spend the majority of their time talking to a wide variety of students and using their thoughts to inform the final report. Throughout my time as Deputy Head, the Care Inspectorate inspections became increasingly detailed and it was very clear that a full, comprehensive, independent, assessment was undertaken. Since I have been Head, Covid-19 has limited full inspections, but our Quarantine arrangements were inspected last term in a very thorough manner. We have submitted copies of our Inspection reports to the Inquiry, and I remain very proud of the endorsement of our pastoral care that they provide. We all know that an excellent score in an Inspection does not mean that there is any room for complacency as schools continually change, everyone needs to be consistently reflective and aim to continue to improve.

### Audit and self-assessment

19. It is very important that opinions are sought on a regular basis from students, parents and staff in order to assess the quality of the service and plan future improvements. We have a well-established Framework for Consultation that ensures that feedback is

sought on all areas of the school: safeguarding, academic and any current issues. In the latest full Pastoral Survey in 2019 we used external safeguarding consultants to provide a comprehensive, independent audit of all our processes; effectively a thorough inspection. More recently, we have consulted on the following: Learning from Home (2020), ED&I consultation (2021) and PSE review (2021). All responses to consultation inform our practices and processes going forward.

20. The addition of our Independent Child Protection Advisor provides another check to ensure that our safeguarding practices are robust and follow all good practice. We can gain advice from her on specific cases, but she also audits our processes using her expertise.

### Self-Evaluation

21. As is best practice, self-evaluation is a continual tool for us to audit all that we do. The annual audit of the school Improvement Plan provides a basis for our quality assurance and involves consultation with students as well as staff. We refer to How Good Is Our school 4 (HGIOS4), National Care Standards, the Framework for Standards, Care Inspectorate Quality Statements and SSSC Guidelines regularly to ensure that our service is of the highest quality in all areas. Inspections check our self-evaluation and recent examples of this have been work on Transitions and Equality Diversity and Inclusion.

### Safeguarding – our thinking, the culture, and the ethos of the school

22. Fettes College is dedicated to ensuring that all students and staff live together in a safe environment. Safeguarding is central to all that we do and is integral to the ethos of the school. It is the duty of all members of staff, throughout the Fettes community, to play an active role in promoting the wellbeing of all our students. Students must feel that they can take any issues and concerns to an adult, confident in the knowledge that they will be treated with respect, listened to and the appropriate action taken. To this end, all members of staff, both teaching and support, are trained so that they have knowledge of safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
23. While this approach is not new, it has developed over recent years, and we continue to work on how best to provide that safe environment. It is evident from the evidence of Applicants, and indeed from our own review of school records, that Fettes has not always provided that safe environment. Pupils have suffered sexual, physical and emotional abuse. They have suffered from peer-on-peer abuse. The school did not provide the pastoral support that it ought to have done. The school also did not respond appropriately when abuse came to light.
24. I will set out in this statement the approach we now take to safeguarding, drawing heavily on the Fettes safeguarding guidance. None of this is to deflect from the seriousness of what has happened in the past. Rather, it is to assist the Inquiry in

understanding our current practices; as they seek to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and as they continue to review all that we do.

25. Our Safeguarding Policy is set in the framework of: Scottish Government's *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC), the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) and The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. We embed the core message of GIRFEC: that everyone has a responsibility to do the right thing for each child and work towards a unified approach, with less bureaucracy and more freedom to respond to children, in everything we do. We ensure that all our processes are GIRFEC compliant; children should get the help they need, when they need it, and their welfare is always paramount.
26. The number and the scope of the safeguarding policies, as put in place, have changed throughout my time at Fettes; in response to changes in guidelines and changing emphases in pastoral care. Any legislative changes are incorporated into policy. New policies are created to reflect changing best practice. If appropriate, these new policies will be compiled with the help of the student body and a process of consultation with pupils. As an example, the Fettes Equality Society (FES) helped with drafting the most recent version of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. When a new policy is adopted, it is brought to the attention of the staff, and discussed. It is then considered and approved at Governor level. It is important that policies are dynamic and familiar to staff and key policies are discussed with students. One means of promoting that understanding is through highlighting to staff a 'Policy of the Week'. All policies are reviewed annually; a named person is responsible for doing so.
27. Our Safeguarding Guidelines start with this sentence: 'At the heart of everything we do at Fettes College is the safety, well-being and happiness of our students'. The work of the Inquiry only underlines how fundamental this is. This ethos is based on strong staff and student relationships. Students and staff relate to each other in a variety of different settings: teaching, tutoring, games, activities, social settings. As a result, students and staff know each other very well. It is our experience that this allows a focus on developing each individual, within the context of a collegiate atmosphere, and informs everything we do.
28. Listening to the evidence, it is clear that in the past the senior boys played a very significant part in running the Houses, and that the Housemasters and staff were not regarded as a visible presence. This is not something I recognise in the Fettes I have worked in, especially having lived in one of the boarding houses. House staff are a near-constant presence in the lives of the children in their care. There is always at least one adult on duty and visible. In the numerous House staff evaluations that I have been involved in, no student has ever complained about the lack of presence of staff; in fact, they have looked at me with confusion when I have asked the question as to whether an adult is available. Pupils know that they can access someone at all times, and that comes from my direct experience as the spouse of a Housemaster. The senior students help in the running of the House; but in a way that is totally different from that described by some witnesses as to what happened in the past. The House Prefects of today (Lower Sixth formers since the establishment of the Upper Sixth house in 2007) are more often friends, role models, confidants to the younger pupils, and assist in the

administrative side of running the house. The breaking down of year-group hierarchies is a real feature of the Fettes community of today, something that all houses proudly advertise.

29. Some Applicants have mentioned the complete lack of Induction when they joined the Fettes community, and this inevitably led to their sense of isolation. A proper programme of welcome has been in place for all of my time at Fettes, and this has developed over the years. All new students get a mentor to help them settle-in, a series of orientation and induction sessions, and plenty of time to learn the new school routines. The positive culture and ethos of Fettes is introduced to all new students in various ways, in House, in Chapel, in sessions with key members of staff, in a specially designed introduction PSE programme. The same is true for staff whose induction process is covered in more detail below.
30. As a boarding school, we know that staff at Fettes College have a particular responsibility to ensure that the children in their care are not harmed. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 gave a statutory focus to that responsibility by placing upon the managers of independent boarding schools a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children resident in their schools.
31. With that in mind, we have incorporated the following guidelines into practice, and these form part of our regular Child Protection training for all staff : namely,

*"Children living away from home for significant periods of time are often more vulnerable in a variety of ways:*

- a. separation from family may result in a readiness to form close emotional attachments to peers and other adults*
- b. emotional or academic stress can result in young people developing self-harming behaviours*
- c. close and sustained contact with peers may result in their succumbing to peer pressure, becoming the victim of bullying, including cyberbullying or themselves indulging in bullying; peer-on-peer abuse.*

*The balance between supervising free time and promoting young people's independence may result in young people becoming involved in potentially risky activities in their leisure time, without the risks having been fully assessed.*

*Such vulnerability can result in children becoming the victims of abuse by themselves, by their peers or by adults, known and unknown to them. As part of our induction packs for students, we therefore provide clear information on sources of support for students. As well as identifying the Child Protection Co-ordinator and other school-based contacts, these include:*

- d. the contact number/access to an independent visitor and/or visiting governor;*
- e. where they can seek help for cyberbullying or any concerns regarding internet safety;*
- f. where available, the contact number of the local authority's Children's Rights Officer;*
- g. a copy of the school's complaints procedure;*

- h. where relevant to the student's age and understanding, a copy of the school's student confidentiality guidance;*
- i. the contact number of Childline, Breathing Space, and a range of helplines and contact numbers, including the Children's Commissioner and the Care Inspectorate to ring in case of problems or distress.*

*Parents also have access to the contact details of the school's Child Protection Co-ordinator, should they have concerns about their child's welfare.*

*It is therefore important to ensure that:*

- j. students are enabled effectively to sustain family contacts through a range of methods including social media, thus reducing feelings of isolation;*
- k. accommodation arrangements, including toilets, showers, and sleeping facilities have regard for students' rights to dignity, privacy and personal space;*
- l. staff have in place good formal and informal methods of monitoring the wellbeing of the students in their care. These should include an adequate supervision ratio, regular individual and group meetings and informal observation at meal-times and in free time;*
- m. the boarding houses have in place good monitoring procedures for students' eating and sleeping patterns to assist early identification of such difficulties as eating disorders or substance misuse;*
- n. a policy is in place to regulate the access students have to mobile technology overnight;*
- o. where students leave the site in their free time, there are robust procedures in place to know the whereabouts of the students, the activities involved, who they are meeting and the expected time of return;*
- p. activities with a strong group ethos, such as cadet forces, pipe bands and sports teams, do not make students feel excluded and all success is celebrated;*
- q. staff have an understanding of the needs of international students."*

32. The Safeguarding Audit (2019) concluded that the evidence points to a school where the ethos puts safeguarding at its centre. Students are aware of this and are clear that staff members are there to support them in keeping safe and ensuring their physical and mental wellbeing. There is an inclusive atmosphere that encourages children to respect each other and to report any concerns. They are aware of their rights and the responsibilities that go along with them and are particularly caring to each other when in their Houses.

## Policies

33. The following policies are included in the safeguarding Guidelines:

- Child Protection – including definitions of abuse;
- Confidentiality Guidelines;
- Responding to a Safeguarding Concern;
- Responding to a Wellbeing Concern;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Counter-Bullying Policy;

- Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy;
  - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
  - Prevent;
  - Adult Support and Protection;
  - IT Acceptable Use.
34. All other policies are available on Firefly (school Information Management System) and in Handbooks.
35. As an example of how our policies are structured, our Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy has sections on:
- Definition of Peer-on-Peer Abuse;
  - How can a young person who is being abused by their peers be identified?
  - What action should be undertaken by staff and students;
  - What parents need to know;
  - Prevention.
36. Policies on their own do not create a culture. Policies need to be understood and enacted by all. This needs to be reinforced consistently in everyday school life and the values that the policies embody must be seen to matter to everyone. Staff and students have to understand and believe the positive culture within a school.
37. The staff need to inculcate this culture but to be successful it also has to come from the students themselves. The Care Inspectorate, in their most recent inspection, said of Fettes that it had a “culture of kindness”. Examples of initiatives that support this culture include: the creation of Fettes Equality Society, the role of PSE Welfare Prefects, the school Welfare Prefects leading counter bullying sessions, the running of The Hub (a drop-in physical space at the heart of the school where the Listening Team are available at various times of the day), our Mental Health Ambassadors (Lower Sixth formers who raise awareness of and provide support for Mental Health); PSE themed weeks (Curiosity and Kindness week, Failure week, Equality week), weeks in which students talk in Chapel and House and have activities at lunchtime and in the evening.
38. A clear, well-known Behaviour and Standards policy is fundamental for a healthy boarding environment. Standards and rules need to be known and understood and the sanctions for not adhering to these rules deemed to be fair. The key to all behaviour, in my opinion, is that our students value a Fettes education, they want to be part of our community and understand that comes with responsibilities. Teenagers will push boundaries and they need to be allowed to learn from mistakes although some serious misdemeanours will result in students being asked to leave the school.
39. The school has a Whistleblowing policy which enables members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations, inappropriate behaviour or unethical conduct. The policy also provides, if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

## Review and assessment of policies

40. The school seeks to continually reflect on its policies and practices; and a system for doing so is enshrined in the way we work.
41. The Pastoral Leadership Team is responsible for conducting reviews of our safeguarding policies and practice including consultation with the students, and for implementing developments and improvements. This process happens annually but in practice is continual and review of processes forms a standing item in all Pastoral Leadership Team meetings. Any notifiable incident that occurs has a full review process following the automatic notification to the relevant authorities, such as the Care Inspectorate or the Police.

## Our Safeguarding systems

### Safeguarding Governors

42. As well as other safeguarding responsibilities, Chairs and Governors are accountable for ensuring their schools have effective Child Protection policies and procedures in place. The Governors are also accountable for the wellbeing and protection of students and have systems in place where these are evaluated and formally reported to them.
43. Whilst safeguarding has always been the responsibility of the whole board, Safeguarding Governors in both the Senior school and the Prep school were established in 2015 to advise the Board on safeguarding, wellbeing and Child Protection matters. They meet regularly with the Safeguarding Committee and the Pastoral Leadership Teams to review safeguarding concerns or complaints and any other key issues arising.
44. The Safeguarding Governors' remit includes: keeping up-to-date with Scottish legislation policy and practice, relevant to safeguarding through appropriate and regular training; advising the Board on safeguarding, wellbeing, and child protection matters; and dealing with any safeguarding complaints that arise.

### Safeguarding Committee

45. Safeguarding Committees in both the Prep and Senior school meet every half term and consist of the relevant Safeguarding Governor and the respective Pastoral Leadership teams. The Committee is responsible for the quality assurance of wellbeing and Child Protection. It conducts a systematic and strategic overview of the number, and nature, of such causes for concerns as may have been raised; including Initial Referral Discussions, Child Protection Case Conferences and Registrations. Meetings are held before the Governors' meetings in order that the Safeguarding Governors can report to the Board of Governors. All meetings are minuted, and the minutes are circulated.

46. The full Safeguarding Committee consists of both Safeguarding Governors, both Heads, the Pastoral Leadership Teams of both schools and our Independent Child Protection Advisor. These meetings are to review practice and set strategy. The Independent Advisor can be contacted as required and is called upon to audit best practice.

#### Safer Recruitment – Staff

47. Staff recruitment is conducted in accordance with our Recruitment Policy. All posts are advertised widely to ensure a high calibre of applicants unless there is a suitable internal candidate. We now advertise in a wider variety of websites, in order to attract a more diverse range of applicants. There is a very rigorous interview process (for external and internal candidates) involving members of the Senior Management Team, members of the teaching department. Student input is a valuable part of the process. A selection of student council representatives now meets all candidates.
48. Written references are taken up for all prospective staff and put on file. While I cannot say when that started, it has been the case throughout the time I have been at Fettes. All referees must state that they know of no reason why that member of staff cannot work with children. Prospective staff complete an application form that requires the candidate to state if there is a medical reason which might affect their ability to undertake the post. All staff on appointment have a new starter form, a sheet which will form the basis of our personnel recording onto the school's information system, and which will follow and record on behalf of the staff member as they submit their PVG, obtain qualifications and attend training sessions (Child Protection, Fire, Prevent etc).
49. Matrons are appointed by the Senior House staff concerned, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Bursar. In the Prep school, matrons are recruited by the Senior Matron together with House staff and the Head. Throughout the College, there is always a decision meeting after the interview process to discuss all the candidates before a decision is made.
50. Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) checks are carried out on all new staff. All members of pastoral staff must be registered with a professional body. All teaching staff are registered with the GTCS and (by law) from June 2021, anyone applying for a teaching post vacancy must be registered before applying. House staff who are not GTCS eligible must register with the SSSC and the appropriate training courses attended and completed.
51. A very comprehensive programme of induction is carried out for all new members of staff. All new members of staff (including Operational Staff) are Child Protection trained before they start teaching. The induction process continues throughout the first year and new staff are not required to run activities in the first half of the Autumn Term so that they can complete training sessions. House staff take responsibility for helping the new members of staff with their tutorial responsibilities and regular tutor meetings take

place where concerns can be addressed. Fettes asks for pastoral training targets to be a key part of Professional Update for all teaching staff in their role as a tutor. Professional Update is the name for the professional development process undertaken by all GTCS registered teachers.

52. The staff handbooks & information on Firefly, including all policies contain the information needed by new members of staff and it is sent out before they arrive but is also reinforced in the Induction process.

#### Staff Welfare

53. We recognise the importance of staff welfare. Senior leaders and line managers in the school meet regularly with individual staff to discuss any concerns and offer support. We recognise that caring for the welfare of the staff is also a means of caring for the wellbeing of pupils. There is a greater risk that staff who are struggling will not promote the wellbeing of pupils as we would want.
54. Staff have access to Wecare, an Employee Assistance Programme 24/7 helpline with qualified, experienced counsellors on hand to support our staff, focussing on guiding them through stressful situations when they need it most. Initial feedback from staff who have accessed this service has been very positive.

#### Child Protection Team

55. There is a Child Protection Coordinator and two Deputies in the Senior school; and a Child Protection Coordinator and her Deputy in the Prep school. In each case, the Child Protection Coordinator has responsibility for implementing child protection in all areas of school life and works closely with staff, the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Safeguarding Governor.
56. The Child Protection Co-ordinators from the Senior school and Prep school meet weekly with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to review recent concerns, share good practice and to agree the school response when any trends of particular concern are identified. All Child Protection cases or significant wellbeing concerns are reviewed regularly, and the school's independent safeguarding advisor is consulted when required. A new system of supervision was introduced in the Autumn Term of 2021 to support staff who deal with significant Child Protection concerns in order to look after their wellbeing.

#### Child Protection Training – across all staff

57. All staff participate in Child Protection Induction and ongoing training and adults who work in any capacity at the school are expected to act professionally and have knowledge of safeguarding procedures. These are also reviewed annually and the guidelines on safeguarding are issued to all members of staff. A Code of Conduct for Staff is issued at the start of the academic year and signed by staff and the Child

Protection team ensure that the staff are kept up to date with developments in this area.

58. There are clear Child Protection Policies which are compliant with statutory requirements and are updated regularly. These documents are available to all staff and students on Firefly. Policies concerned with staffing and working practices are also on Firefly and contained within Staff Handbook
59. As part of GTCS Professional Update, all teaching staff are required to take part in regular professional learning so that they are confident in responding to any Child Protection or Safeguarding issue, including counter-bullying, internet safeguarding, child sexual exploitation and extremism. Operational staff are also trained in all safeguarding matters, with their handbook setting out clearly all the policies.

#### House Staff Child Protection Training

60. In response to an area for development which was highlighted following the 2019 Safeguarding Audit, the Child Protection Coordinator has created specific Child Protection training for the House staff, to allow for more in-depth training which is tailored to our school environment. The first such session took place in November 2020 and regular sessions now happen using this format during in-service training days.

#### Medical Centre

61. The students have access to the Medical Centre whenever they need, and it is a very important part of our pastoral care. There is a clear medical confidentiality policy which is important and helps the students to make full use of the Medical Centre as another source of confidential advice.
62. The House staff, Pastoral Leadership Teams and Medical Centre work effectively together and with many agencies to support the social, emotional and health needs of children and young people. The Medical Centre provides medical support from registered nurses 24 hours a day. Doctors (one male and three female) are available at clinics at various points in the week and the school Medical Officer also provides excellent medical advice about individual cases when needed.
63. There is a funded school counsellor, whom students can access without the knowledge of the school or parents, and we employ a life coach, behavioural consultant, psychiatrist and three clinical psychologists whom we use to help us look after the wellbeing of our students and assist with staff training. The Senior Charge Nurse, together with the Deputy Heads (Pastoral) from both the Prep school and the Senior school, meet regularly with the school's counselling team to discuss recent concerns and to agree the appropriate referrals and actions to offer additional support to individual students. These triage meetings happen weekly and are an integral part of our care.

64. External Agencies are contacted when required and close working partnerships with these external agencies have resulted in very positive outcomes for some students who require additional support.
65. The Nursing staff provide practical advice in a wide variety of areas both formally through the PSE programme and informally through student visits to the Medical Centre. They also provide support to the House staff. Advice includes information on nutrition and healthy eating, drug abuse, mental health, sexual health and hygiene, counter bullying and internet safety.

### Pastoral Leadership

66. Most children will get all the help and support they need from their families, the school, universal services and their community. However, at various times during childhood and adolescence, many children will need some extra help. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) can provide or access information, advice and support to children from within the school and, when necessary, request support from other services or agencies.
67. This allows for effective information-sharing and the management of concerns about children. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will identify and consider the child's wellbeing and share appropriate information with others collaboratively with the child, their family and other services. Through effective intervention and the sharing of wellbeing information, it is hoped that concerns can be resolved at an early stage.
68. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) chairs the Pastoral Leadership Team which consists of the Senior Deputy Head, Head of PSE and member of staff i/c Standards and Behaviour.

### Operational aspects of our systems and policies

iSAMS Pastoral Manager System – a cloud-based school safeguarding information management system

69. iSAMS Ltd worked with staff at Fettes College to create a bespoke software system to record and share pastoral wellbeing and child protection concerns. iSAMS is a leading provider of information management systems designed for schools, and provides products specifically designed for the needs of the independent schools' sector. This new Pastoral Manager module allows us to record, access and manage sensitive student information both securely and centrally, to create a chronology for individual students and to identify any trends of concern. Staff have been trained in using this system and are aware of updated GDPR guidelines on the recording of student information; one member of staff has been appointed to manage this database system and another new role has been created to advise members of staff on any issues pertaining to GDPR.

70. The Safeguarding Audit (2019) commended the pioneering work carried out by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Head of Pastoral Care (Prep), in conjunction with iSAMS, in developing a state-of-the-art tracking system which, among other things, includes wellbeing and Child Protection. Crucially, this innovative system enables the production of chronologies - an integral part of a Child Protection toolkit.

### OneNote

71. Although any significant student concerns are recorded on the iSAMS Pastoral Manager, all boarding houses now have OneNote notebooks (a digital notebook that automatically saves and syncs notes as one works) for staff to create ongoing records on students. This integrated approach to recording pastoral concerns at all levels ensures that all House staff have quick and secure access to updated notes on the students in their House. Features of this system include:
- Notebooks are set up every year by Deputy Head (Pastoral);
  - Notebooks are tutor-facing;
    - Each tutor has their own section with individual pages for each tutee,
    - Tutors record the main substance of tutorial conversations,
    - Tutors can only see their own sections,
    - Individual Student Plans are agreed with students at the start of each term in discussion with their tutors and student targets and any relevant updates are stored here.
  - House-parents have access all areas to facilitate overview, and use it to record non-essential information on students: e.g. ongoing email thread with a subject tutor about a student's progress. All sensitive information on students is stored securely in the Pastoral Manager section of iSAMS;
  - Matrons also have access;
  - House notebooks are archived at the end of every academic session.

### AS Tracking

72. To further enhance our pastoral care, Fettes College introduced Affective Social Tracking (AS Tracking) in 2017 for all students. This online assessment tool allows us to monitor the emotional wellbeing and progress of our students throughout the school, which then helps to guide our pastoral interactions with students and to identify any additional support which they may require. The school has recently been awarded Accredited status as the leading school in Scotland using this adolescent mental health tracking system to aid early pastoral intervention. As the next stage of development, we are now testing their USteer programme, which would enable us to offer personalised guidance to the Upper Sixth, preparing our students for life after Fettes.

### Responding to a Wellbeing Concern

73. Our safeguarding processes are all GIRFEC compliant and a major part of this is noticing and recording wellbeing concerns. These are low level concerns but may form

part of a bigger picture and therefore the need to ensure they form part of our processes is essential.

74. Once a wellbeing concern has arisen, and been recorded on iSAMS Pastoral Manager, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will meet with key pastoral staff to assess what additional support the child may require within the school and agree upon action points. In consultation with the Pastoral Lead (normally the Houseparent), they will continue to monitor the situation and liaise with students, parents and staff. Any significant events or decisions made will be recorded and stored securely on iSAMS in a format which includes the wellbeing concern form, a chronology of significant events, any action points and a review.
75. The pastoral team will review the wellbeing of the child regularly and access any additional support which is required. If the situation escalates or there is a significant wellbeing concern, then the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to initiate a Student Support Plan.

#### Student Support Plan

76. The Student Support Plan is used to coordinate the support provided within Fettes College. This enables us to monitor and support the student while using our Medical Centre or school counsellor and helps us to record progress and to keep detailed records of concerns and actions.
77. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Pastoral Lead meets with the child and their family to discuss any wellbeing concerns, agree an action plan and a review date. Children and their parents will be asked to contribute their views to the student support plan and have access to its contents.
78. The child's progress will then be closely monitored and reviewed with the involvement of children and their parents. If the child is deemed to be at risk, the pastoral team make a decision as to whether targeted intervention and the use of outside agencies would be necessary to meet the wellbeing needs of the child and initiate a Child's Plan. The response should be proportionate and reasonable.

#### GIRFEC Child's Plan

79. Production of a GIRFEC Child's Plan is only necessary if external agencies are involved in meeting the needs of the child. It is advised if more than one targeted intervention (specialist support services such as CAMHS) is sought, and should link together all the key people supporting the child.
80. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) would be required to actively seek the views of children and their parents unless there are compelling reasons, such as serious concerns about children's safety, that would stop them doing so. The plan should make clear to children and parents what they and others are to do in order that children's wellbeing is supported.

## Curriculum – Personal, Social and Emotional Education Programme (PSE)

81. The Personal, Social and Emotional education programme is an essential part of providing a well-rounded curriculum throughout one's time at school. It is the proactive means by which learning can happen. There are a number of key strands to the PSE Curriculum (see the Table below). It is our experience that the boarding house system and the ethos of school life both contribute to the development of emotional resilience, well-being, values, attitudes and learning of important life skills.
82. Teaching methods are diverse. Sessions vary between the personal in-House session, the single sex or mixed plenary session, to smaller tutor groups. Sessions may be formal in nature, with Guest Speakers. PSE lessons can include cross links to other subjects in the curriculum. Chapel offers the time for reflection, whereas tutor groups provide a more intimate and informal atmosphere for discussion. We have an experienced PSE team delivering the various strands which include members of the academic staff, the Medical Centre staff, and PSE Prefects in the Lower Sixth, as well as outside speakers and charities.
83. Our programme aims to provide all students with appreciation and understanding of the issues that they are experiencing or could experience in the future. We aim to provide good, relevant information relating to areas of their personal, social and emotional development by offering opportunities for them to develop key skills such as resilience, resourcefulness, healthy relationships, decision making, risk assessment, communication skills and strategies for coping.
84. Our programme aims to develop major themes in the curriculum covering:
- Health and Wellbeing (Nutrition, Mental Health, Wellbeing & Mindfulness);
  - Citizenship, Personal Values & Life Skills;
  - Drug-Awareness;
  - Positive Relationships;
  - Counter Bullying;
  - Internet Safety.
85. Each strand is discussed during each year group, building and expanding on certain areas as the students move up the school. The topics covered include:

Third Form	Fourth Form	Fifth Form	Sixth Form
Personal Hygiene	Mindfulness	Tolerance including Homophobia – LGBT issues, Feminism	Drugs – Alcoholism, Street Drugs, Binge Drinking
Drugs Introduction -	Mental Health Issues	Addiction	Online Reputation - Career/Work

Keeping Safe Online - sexting	Sex in Society, Empowerment, Domestic Violence	Radicalism	Learning to Drive – Young Driver Event
Personal Safety	Use of Social Media & Screen Time (Cyberbullying)	Consent & Legal Issues Fake ID's	Indulgence Safety
Nutrition – practical & theoretical	Alcohol Safety (House Parties)	Self Esteem & Risk Taking Behaviours	Relationships – Their Issues
Teenage Cancer	Nutrition for Success	Finance (Careers)	Risks & Consequences
Diversity	Gender Being Safe Sexually	Contraception & STI's/Porn in Society	Mindfulness & Combat Stress Update
Counter Bullying & MVP Lessons	Sleep	Creating the Right Online Profile	Nutritional Life Skills
Body Image	Personal Values	Stress Management (and Nutrition impact of sugar)	Finance (Credit Cards/Loans)
CPR	Personal Finance	CPR	Bold Voices – university
Social Inclusion	Female Genital Mutilation	Self-Checks (Cancer)	Health & Wellbeing Carousel
Gaming		New Psychoactive Substances	

86. A great deal of discussion and planning goes into the development of the PSE/Tutorial Programme. It aims to support the students as individuals and help them to make choices and achieve their potential. Every strand (Careers, PSE, Study Skills and Access to University) has a Development Plan and the effectiveness of these programmes are being continually assessed so that the programme meets the current concerns and requirements of each year group. We are currently undergoing a consultation with students and staff on the full PSE programme to ensure we incorporate all current views and issues and make any adjustments necessary. We understand completely the need to listen to what the students want in this important strand of their education.

87. The Fourth and Fifth Forms have extra PSE sessions within the timetable, and these are used to cover areas of PSE which the students themselves have identified as areas of concern that they would like discussed.

88. The Fourth Form Mindfulness Programme is now well established. The course provides core skills, relevant to mindfulness as a concept. Some choose to develop these further. Resources for this Programme come from the 'Mindfulness in schools Programme'. Feedback from students is very positive, and we think it important to be proactive in this area.
89. The 'Seasons for Growth' programme for helping students deal with issues of death, separation and divorce is now well established, and feedback has been positive from both students and parents. Students from the course have been brave enough to speak in Chapel about the programme and these hugely powerful and personal talks encourage more to apply for the next round of sessions.
90. Recent introductions include *Girls on Board* (empowering young women) and the *Great Men Initiative (Masculinity in the Modern World)* both being introduced to the curriculum.
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## PSE Prefects

96. School Welfare Prefects and PSE Prefects are fully involved in the provision of the PSE programme's content and delivery which ensures that the topics covered are directly relevant to the health and wellbeing needs of the students. They are all trained in Child Protection (CP) and in the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme (MVP).
97. We are very conscious of online bullying and the Child Protection co-ordinators have been especially active in educating the students in this area within the PSE programme. PSE Prefects also help with education and vigilance.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

98. The Fettes Equality Society (FES) was established by the students with staff support in 2017 and its agenda is based on respect. It has been a success and initiatives such as Equality Week aim to reinforce an atmosphere of understanding, respect and trust. FES encourages open dialogue amongst students about all equality issues, whilst a recent initiative we have adopted, *Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme*, aims to challenge thinking and support learning about healthy relationships, cultivating skills to empower students now and in the future.
99. Following the global Black Lives Matter campaign in 2020, the staff Fettes Equality Group (FEG) was set up with the aim to examine how race, gender and sexuality relate to our curriculum, PSE programme, student and staff behaviour, and wider school life (such as the boarding experience, for example). The group's objectives are to continue to build an anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-homophobic culture that reflects the College's principal aim, that of nurturing the individual whilst fostering a happy, well-ordered and caring community. This has been done by:
  - convening working groups under headings of race, gender, sexuality
  - conducting a root-and-branch review of all systems, practices, policies and documentation as appropriate, done by working alongside those responsible in the school for these areas
  - consultation with student and staff bodies, including for example a survey of the 'Fettes experience'
  - consultation with external experts
  - education and training for all adults working on the school grounds, provided by both external parties (including OFs) and appropriate existing staff.
100. To a large extent, these are not new developments: we have sought to foster and indeed celebrate culture, diversity and inclusion over many years. However, we continue to seek ways of developing and strengthening that for our pupils. In 2017 the school obtained a gold charter mark in LGBT+ training from LGBT Scotland. We have LGBTQ+ roles models on the staff. Fettes Prep school is now a Rights Respecting school and the aim is for this programme to continue throughout the College.

## Responding to Allegations of Abuse

### Managing Non-Recent Child Abuse Allegations

101. As the Inquiry is aware, we have contacted the Old Fettesian community to alert them to the work of the Inquiry on a number of occasions and this has led to contact from former pupils reporting that they suffered abuse while at Fettes. I have responded to all approaches personally and we have passed correspondence to the Inquiry. We consulted with a survivors' charity to ensure that we handled our responses sensitively. There has been training for relevant staff, so those reporting abuse were looked after appropriately. Training took place in January 2019 with Governor involvement, and this proved to be very helpful when contact was made subsequently with survivors. We provided refresher training in Autumn Term 2021.

### The Future: Development of welfare and safeguarding in the future

102. Child pastoral care, welfare and safeguarding is never static. We are continually developing policies and reviewing our practices to ensure that we are providing the best possible standard of care. There are several specific areas currently in development.

103. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been updated for this academic year and a copy is attached to the appendix. Following a consultation with the Fettes community, the FEG issued a survey to students and staff in Spring 2021. The key strands of the survey were race and religion; gender and sexuality. We were pleased to note a 94% return rate from students and this allowed the FEG to identify key action points for this session. These included dates of cultural significance to be added to the school calendar, a review of the curriculum and PSE course, and regular staff and student leadership teams training on equality and inclusion. We will continue to collaborate with the prefects and student leadership teams in the long term to reflect on the school's policies and handling of matters pertaining to inclusion and equality. We are also now working with Inclusion Labs, an external organisation who are going to both guide us and audit us on our ongoing ED&I journey. They will be able to give us guidance on shaping an effective role for the school's new ED&I Lead and offer specialist INSET training sessions for staff in the Senior and Prep schools. Following a full audit of our practices and policies, they will recommend priorities for improvement, provide targeted direction, and measure our progress. We continue to look at ways to diversify our recruitment including offering applicants the opportunity to talk to a member of our current staff who identifies as BAME.

104. While we take care to follow and learn from movements such as Black Lives Matter and Everyone's Invited, it is important to us that we are proactive and not simply reactive. To be proactive in this way, open and honest communication with our students is paramount. The Applicants' evidence has reinforced the need to continue to identify new and creative means of hearing what the student truly feels. For

example, after consultation students have asked that we trial an app, which we are doing.

105. In response to student consultation, we are looking into the introduction of a non-binary uniform.

106. Planning is underway for a new purpose-built on-site Wellbeing Centre. This will provide a dedicated health and well-being hub that will further enhance our pastoral care. The medical centre, our mental health services and our listening teams will be re-located to this building; and we are currently researching what additional facilities will support the needs of our students in the future.

## Conclusion

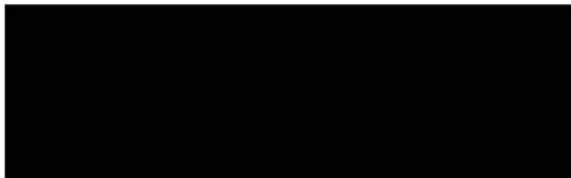
107. To conclude, after the first day's evidence I wrote of my reaction to my Senior Leadership Team as follows. I was not suggesting that we do not do these things. I strongly believe that we do, but their importance was made abundantly clear.

108. The thoughts that I shared with them were

- It shows the responsibility placed on us – in the evidence of the Applicants we have heard first-hand evidence of how what happens during your school years has a huge impact.
- We can never be complacent.
- The culture of a school is fundamentally important. That culture must be common to all – Governors, Head, Senior Leaders, all staff, and all pupils. We must be kind to each other.
- We need to be active in the creation (or continuation) of a culture that nurtures and respects. You cannot sit back.
- Everyone needs a voice – we need to be creative in how we ensure people have someone they trust, someone they can disclose to.
- We need to recruit the right people and ensure they are well trained
- We must ensure we 'build up' and celebrate success in all areas
- We need to NOTICE and to do this we need to CARE.
- We need to be ahead of the game – we need to be at the forefront of pastoral care, think about the 'next' issues and be bold in tackling them.

109. These thoughts have been reinforced every day.

110. 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.



3/12/21