

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KMN

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is KMN. My date of birth is 1948. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background/Qualifications/Training

2. I have a BSc in Biology from East Anglia University from 1969 and I qualified as a teacher the following year at Birmingham University with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, (PGCE). I started teaching in a girl's school in Nottinghamshire called Sherwood Hall. I was there for two years from 1970 to 1972.
3. In January 1973 I started working in a secondary school in Nigeria. It was a school for boys aged between eleven and eighteen, although their ages weren't always confirmed. It was a boarding school, taking lads from all over northern Nigeria. There were about four or five hundred children. I stayed there until March 1974.
4. We came back to the United Kingdom and I saw a job advertisement for Lendrick Muir school. I was interviewed by SNR and KVV in May 1974. Everyone knew him as KVV. I was successful in getting the job as assistant biology teacher and I started in the August of that year.
5. I was assistant biology teacher until 1981, when I was promoted to SNR. I continued in that role until 1984. KVV retired in 1984 and he was replaced by Mr [REDACTED]. He only stayed quite a short time and left at the end of 1984 and I was

promoted to SNR in January 1981. I remained as SNR until 1991 before resigning.

6. I became a supply science teacher in Perth & Kinross and central region at secondary schools for the next ten years until I retired altogether in 2008. After retiring I did a spell as a first responder in [REDACTED], where we had moved to. I was chairman of that group and did it for about five years. Just recently I have become a volunteer for a group monitoring the pollution level in the river here. We moved down to this area in 2016.

Experiences at Lendrick Muir school, Rumbling Bridge

7. When I applied for the job at Lendrick Muir it was advertised as a school for maladjusted children, which is a bit of a catch all phrase for children with behavioural and/or emotional difficulties. There might have been mainstream school refusals. We didn't have awareness of the specific learning difficulties that we have now, things like autism weren't really diagnosed in the 1970s. Things like Aspergers, dyslexia and dyscalculia, were all just under the title of maladjusted children, for want of a better word really. They just weren't able to cope in mainstream school.
8. Lendrick Muir itself was in quite an isolated, rural situation. It was near a local beauty spot, Rumbling Bridge, which is about seven or eight miles outside Kinross. It had its own grounds of about sixty acres, which consisted of woodland, playing fields and tennis courts. It was a very attractive situation.
9. When I arrived at the school I think there were over a hundred children altogether. The vast majority I would say were boys, with a small group of girls. The girls were housed separately in a big house in Rumbling Bridge, which was about a mile away from the school. The house was called Craig Ard, and one of the things we had to do in the morning about 8.30 am, was bring them up to the school in the minibus. The children were secondary school age, between eleven and eighteen. There were quite a few senior boys of seventeen and eighteen years of age there when I arrived. There was

a purpose-built classroom block, with six classrooms and a laboratory, which was attached to the main building.

10. The teachers were all qualified. I did not know the qualifications of the care staff. The matron would oversee the care staff and she was overseen by the headteacher.

First impressions

11. I thought the school was fine. My wife and I were very enthusiastic about moving to that area as it was beautiful. We had one young daughter at the time and another one arriving fairly soon, so we had a young family and it seemed the ideal place for them to grow up. We were given a bungalow on the grounds of the school. There was a driveway away from the main building and a row of bungalows and the teachers resided in those. So, my first impressions were that it was a very attractive posting.
12. My impression of the staff towards the children was that they appeared very caring and very professional. It was a school, we didn't really see ourselves as a care home. Our aim was to provide a good education and prepare the pupils for their 'O' Grades and Highers, if they wanted to stay on to do that. When I arrived there were about a dozen or so that were doing their Highers. There were about half a dozen care staff, house parents. Ladies who would look after the welfare of the kids. The teaching staff were mainly men, there were about three ladies. Overall, their attitude was a professional teacher approach to the children. I think it was an important part of KVV philosophy that we treated them as far as possible as school children, and not to treat them differently to how we would treat children in a mainstream school.
13. It was a teacher/pupil relationship but I would say that it was enhanced by the fact that many of the teachers had interests to involve and challenge the children outside of the classroom, which again I think was part of KVV philosophy, to recruit these types of teachers. Several of them were very good outward bounds sort of people as well as being academically qualified. One of the teachers, Crispin Heath, who was only there over my first three years before he left, set up his own outward-bound business in the East Neuk in Fife. He was excellent at mountaineering. That was the type of person

that **KVV** wanted in the school. I was asked if I had these types of skills, but I didn't have many. I quickly learned.

14. I did quite a lot of sport in those days. I played football and tennis with the children. We had a big games hall, which was a fantastic facility. There was room for three badminton courts, we could play indoor football. Crispin introduced me to hillwalking and I started taking groups of half a dozen out into the hills. Sometimes the Ochil Hills, sometimes further afield to do some Munros. One thing that was quite rewarding for the children was if they achieved a Munro they would get a certificate of recognition from the Lendrick Muir Munro Club. The club was set up by another teacher, Mr **KIT**, who was another enthusiast on outward bound activities.
15. Other teachers had other interests, so there would be things like music and I played chess. There was a group of lads who set up their own pop group. I can remember them practising in the music room. I had a piano qualification that I got in 1966, so I took a few of the boys and girls up to my home to practise piano. **[REDACTED]** arrived at the school around 1977 or 1978 and he was brilliant on the piano. He was a naturally gifted lad and he got a lot out of playing the piano. When he arrived, he was reluctant to play. I'm not sure why but I took him into the entrance hall, where there was a beautiful Grand piano and encouraged him and eventually he started playing. He went from strength to strength and he does concerts now. He is a very talented lad. Bryan Smith taught them art, pottery and sculpture. The school had its own kiln. So, there was a variety of things they could do.

My time at Lendrick Muir

16. I was interviewed by **SNR**, **KVV**. It was only him, there wasn't a panel. I can't remember but I must have given references. I would assume that he followed them up, but I don't know.
17. When I arrived, the head of science, Jim Haig, was also deputy head. He was my direct manager. So, there was **KVV**, Jim Haig, and **KDG** was in charge of the girls. **KDG** was also a very experienced teacher. He had been there with **KVV** for a

number of years. I wouldn't say he was a deputy head, he just had specific responsibility for the girls.

18. I wasn't aware of any training or appraisals when I was a teacher at the school. We tried to teach to the best of our ability. There was no induction training. I just went straight in and you were expected to cope, get to know the kids and help them achieve. There were informal discussions between Jim Haig and me about the children. Obviously, we shared the same lab, so we were talking all the time about how things were going. We would discuss what we could provide, the lessons we would be following and the curriculum. All that would be discussed with Jim, day to day.
19. Nothing changed in relation to training and appraisals when I became SNR and then SNR. When I first arrived, as I said, there were over a hundred children and they were housed in these quite large dormitories, which had bunk beds. I felt that that wasn't very appropriate, so one of the first things I did when I became SNR was break the dormitories up into kind of sections with partitions put up, as I thought the children should have a bit more privacy. The numbers had decreased by then, I think we were down to around seventy pupils because local authorities were changing their policies on sending children to us. As our numbers were decreasing I thought I could use that as an opportunity to improve the accommodation. I remember the boys were quite delighted when they came back from their holidays to find they had their own little space.
20. I wouldn't say I had the autonomy to change things as I saw fit while I SNR SNR, but I could put forward suggestions to KVV and he was usually quite responsive. He would have the last say, but he was in favour of trying to improve things for the kids.
21. When I became SNR I was accountable to the governing body. We had some quite influential people as governors. Peter Priestly who I think was head or deputy head of education for Lothian Region, Penny Leslie, who was quite high up in the social work in Lothian. Miss Lowe was secretary to the board and being a C.A. she was very influential regarding spending. I would have a meeting with the board of

governors around a couple of times a term. I would report on the general state of affairs at the school, anything in particular that was causing concern, particularly recruitment. That was an ongoing concern. As the number of children were falling, finances were becoming quite tight, as a result there was a reduction in staffing numbers. That became particularly acute and Mr [REDACTED], who was SNR around 198[REDACTED] or 198[REDACTED], found it difficult that he was required to make several members of staff redundant. It got his SNR [REDACTED] off to a bad start. The staff had been there a few years and were very close. It caused a bit of friction. It was a difficult time.

22. As SNR [REDACTED] I had a great deal of involvement in day-to-day things at the school. I was still teaching a full timetable. I was seeing the kids in class, I was still doing the duties that the teachers shared with the care staff, getting the kids up in the morning, supervising mealtimes, getting them settled at night. So, it was a very full-on involvement. It was long hours making sure that the school was running ok. I was very hands on.
23. Balancing the protection of the school's reputation and the wellbeing and safety of the children went hand in hand. We had educational psychologists who would come in and review the children or we would take the children to reviews. Obviously, part of the school's reputation would be how the children were responding, how they were getting on. So, it was an integral part of what we did. We would issue reports on the children regularly. The parents weren't involved very much unless there was a formal review. We didn't see very much of the parents. Most of these children were with us because they had very difficult home backgrounds. So, I did as much as I could to improve and maintain the reputation, which I thought was very important.

Personal influence

24. We didn't have any written down rules and regulations for the children at the school when KVV was SNR [REDACTED] or when I SNR [REDACTED]. I thought the children were so variable that specific rules wouldn't be appropriate for that group of children. I felt they needed individual responses. We preferred to have a loose structure without any specific rules.

25. With regards specific regulations for the school itself, I never saw any regulations, but I'm sure the governing body would be very familiar to what residential establishments should be doing and they would be seeing me every couple of months. So, if I was breaking regulations hopefully they would have stepped in. Discipline and punishment were individualised. There wasn't a blanket policy in relation to it. It was a very close-knit community. All of us, as qualified teachers and care staff, were committed to looking after the children. We made sure the care staff were regularly seeing the children. We had a matron's room and the children's hair was checked regularly. Any medication a child might be on, was given to them there. Miss Duff was the matron when I arrived. She was replaced by Mrs Gillet, who was replaced by Mrs Bissett.
26. I thought it was pretty important that children needed to speak to somebody who was not a teacher. They had the opportunity to do that in the matron's room in a one to one with a house mother to talk about any problems they may have had when they were ostensibly just getting their tablets. It was private and they knew it would be confidential unless they were raising something that alarmed Mrs Bissett and she would speak with **KVV** or myself.
27. As I said, I was getting the children up at times, supervising mealtimes, so children would speak to me, come and complain about things to me. I was very visible as **SNR**, which ensured that so far as possible, no child at Lendrick Muir experienced abuse or ill-treatment. I knew the kids very well. I could see if a child was upset and so would other members of staff. That was the protection that I thought they had.
28. Apart from the improvements in the accommodation, which was a major thing, I can't think of any other changes that I implemented as **SNR**. I think **KVV** was a little bit remote, I tried to be much more visible. As I was teaching and always in the school block, which was separated from the main building, albeit connected, I thought I was always in touch with what was happening at the school.

Policy

29. Any policies for the school were really the responsibility of the board of governors. I can't remember any particular changes to how things were done at the school. If there was to be it would be communicated to me at the meetings with the board, but I can't remember any changes in policy.

Strategic planning

30. I was involved in strategic planning to an extent, when I met with the governing body, but we were just trying to manage decline really. The numbers were going down and some of the children that came to the school became more difficult because local authorities would only refer them to us as a last resort. So, the clientele was changing a bit. I don't think we really responded to that adequately.
31. The school did close in 1987 and re-opened in 1988. I had quite a long discussion with the governing body about whether we could continue. Could we change the direction of the school to fit in with what the local authorities were looking for, could we become a mixed day/boarding school, rather than purely a boarding school. Those discussions resulted in us offering a service to dyslexic children and we could have a mixture of day and boarding pupils. That was a big change because it meant that children would have to be brought in by taxis, so that would require organisation. Most boarders went home at weekends, some would stay but not very many.
32. In order to provide more specialised teaching for dyslexic children, we recruited an English teacher, Miss Faid. She had some background in dyslexia and I underwent a training course with a Dr Collins, who was at George Watsons. She was quite well known as somebody who was pushing for the problems with dyslexia to be highlighted. She had a course on teaching children with dyslexia, which I enrolled for. In addition to that I actually did some modules on the Open University for special education.
33. So, we re-opened with about half a dozen children in 1988. It was quite a big gamble to see if we could maintain the school. One came from down south and the others

came from Aberdeenshire. That went quite well and we started getting children from Perth. We reached a maximum of about twenty-five children. So, that was a big change.

Structure and recruitment of staff

SNR leadership style

34. The structure when I started at Lendrick Muir was KVV as SNR and Jim Haig as deputy and my line manager. I would describe KVV leadership style as very much respected by staff and the pupils. 'Hands off' would probably be the most appropriate phrase. He liked leaving individuals to deal with things as they felt appropriate, but he was always there. He would intervene if he thought that someone was having problems or if people went to him with problems he would offer advice and help. That was staff and pupils, anybody. His door was always open. I don't know how many years he was SNR, it was a long time.
35. He was just a kind of father figure. He was very supportive. Any initiative you wanted to take, if you wanted to take the kids out anywhere, he would support that. I remember I took a double decker bus of kids to Aberdour. There must have been thirty to forty kids on the bus, including my family. We had a great day out and there were no problems. Nowadays there would be all kinds of risk assessments you would have to carry out before that could happen. I think he just trusted the people he had appointed. There was quite a lot of autonomy. It wasn't a kind of management style that would be appropriate today. Things like policies for child protection would have to be written down and formally appreciated by all the staff. In the seventies and eighties, it was much more, "You're a professional teacher, you're looking after the children, you treat them appropriately". He employed staff who he could trust to do that properly. It was informal but it worked.

Recruitment

36. As a teacher I was never involved in the recruitment of staff. When I was SNR I didn't have a formal SNR. Dave Simmons was very much SNR, if you like.
37. Mr PDV, who had been teaching in the main school, approached me and said he would like to set up a unit for juniors in what was Craig Ard, the girls' house, changing the name to Seamab. I think that must have been the year we closed. I don't think there were any girls at that stage. So, he came to me with that proposal. He took children from four or five years old through primary school age, boys and girls. I think that's still going. They built a new purpose-built school for it just half a mile outside Rumbling Bridge. That became quite separate from the main school but under the same governing body.

SNR role
38. In the role of SNR I was responsible for providing the children with an appropriate curriculum and that the teachers were aware of their roles as subject teachers. I had specific responsibility for the timetable and organising the various members of staff.
39. When we changed, having closed for a year, I recruited several new staff. I interviewed them, together with a member of the governing body. I think we recruited a new maths teacher, a new social worker, we recruited Judith Faid for English and later, when we had more children, I brought in a part-time art teacher and a full-time PE teacher.
40. Any suitable applicants were interviewed by myself and Mr Cowan, on the Board of Governors. We had several applicants and we decided who was best and appointed them. They were all qualified teachers. Some of them were newly qualified, some had come from other secondary schools. Varied backgrounds really. I can't remember any voluntary staff at Lendrick Muir. All new staff were vetted and disclosure checks made and references were checked.

Training

41. There was never any formal training of staff at Lendrick Muir, either when I was a teacher or as SNR. When I was SNR I was informally involved in staff training. Some of them hadn't been in that kind of situation before. You could call it induction, I would take them round and show them how things ran at the school. I'd share a few of the duties with them initially until they got the hang of it.

Supervision/appraisal/evaluation

42. There were no appraisals or evaluations of staff at Lendrick Muir while I was a teacher or when in my role as SNR. There was no formal monitoring as such. As I said, I was there if the staff wanted to speak to me, or if I thought there was something going on I would try to help them if they were having any particular problems. By and large things were ok.

Children/Routine at Lendrick Muir School

43. When we were dealing with the so-called 'maladjusted' children, they would usually be referred by a children's panel. They would come to us through a supervision requirement. A psychologist would be involved in that. They would come round and have a look at the school and probably bring the children with them the first time so that they could have a look around.
44. I remember KVV would have a staff meeting when a child was to be admitted to the school. He would tell us about their academic attainments. There was often a measure of their IQ and there would be discussions about their home background, any problems they may have encountered at home. So, there was quite a lot of information that KVV would share with us about any new arrivals.
45. I carried this on in my role as SNR. As we were dealing with dyslexic children by then, we had assessments from dyslexia psychologists. There was a principal English teacher responsible for improving their reading and writing, using an individualised approach for each child. We didn't have specific plans in other subjects.

In small classes, teachers could adapt their approach according to their pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

46. Some of the children came to Lendrick Muir at the start of high school age and stayed on to the end of their school age, but most didn't. A lot of children didn't come until they were about thirteen years old, when problems were really arising as they reached adolescence. The majority only stayed until school leaving age, sixteen. So, most would be at the school for two to three years.
47. In classes, the ratio of children to teachers would have been around ten to one. The overall ratio, when you included the care staff, was probably about eight to one.

Mealtimes / Food

48. The food was made on site. We had our own kitchen. The cook and kitchen staff were supervised by Miss Aird, the housekeeper. The food was very good. The staff would eat with the children in the dining hall. I can't recall if there were alternatives if anyone didn't like what was on offer, but the vast majority of children enjoyed the food. The kitchen staff were aware of any dietary requirements. Again, we weren't aware of the number of allergies that seem to be present today.

Sleeping Arrangements

49. When I started, we had four main areas where the children slept. There was a junior corridor in which there were four large rooms and each room would have about four children in it. You could then go up the steps to the middle corridor, which was for children around thirteen to fourteen years old. In this there would be three larger rooms with about six boys in each room. Two members of staff had their rooms in that corridor. Upstairs was for the more senior pupils, perhaps fifteen to sixteen years old. Downstairs there was one room where the most senior boys stayed. When I arrived it was the head boy and his friend that stayed there. That was the accommodation.

Washing and Bathing

50. There were showers on the junior corridor and the middle corridor as well as on the top floor. They were all communal. At bedtime the children would have their supper downstairs before going up to their rooms. They would be required to shower and get ready for bed. They could then watch a bit of TV before bed, when we got one. There wasn't a TV upstairs when I arrived, there was only the one downstairs. We did manage to get one for each corridor later on. Lights out would be at 9.30 pm for the juniors and 10.00 pm for the middle and top floors. There was a teacher and a member of the care staff on duty on both the junior and middle corridors. The middle and top corridors were monitored by the same staff.

Leisure/Trips/Holidays

51. There were several members of staff who were very keen to take the kids on camping trips for weekends. They didn't have holidays away as such, as far as I can remember. One member of staff would take groups camping down to Loch Lomond and take them out on a boat on to one of the islands at Loch Lomond. That was a great adventure for the kids.
52. I remember taking a couple of girls to the cinema in Stirling to see Chariots of Fire. It was also common practice that members of staff would take children to their own accommodation. We would try to give them some kind of experience of family living outside the institution. When we first arrived, we would have some of the kids come to our house for tea. Two or three at any one time.

Healthcare

53. When I was SNR [REDACTED] the matron was Mrs Bissett. I'm not aware of her qualifications but she was a very experienced and caring person. She would administer aspirin and attend to minor ailments. I don't think there was anything more serious. We did have visits from the doctor and a dentist as well. I can't remember any children requiring any serious medication.

54. I remember, later on in my time at the school, that the drug Ritalin was being prescribed to some of the children. Mrs Bissett would administer this. They were usually prescribed this before they came to the school.

Schooling

55. Children went from class to class for different subjects, just like any school, apart from the very young ones. They would just stay with their junior, or first year teacher. When I first arrived that was a Mrs Urquhart. She died and was replaced by Mr MKF. Mrs Walker took some primary classes as well.

Chores

56. The children didn't have to do any chores at the school apart from as a punishment. One of the punishments they were given was sweeping. The games hall would be swept as a punishment. As a science teacher I often had a lot of dirty test tubes. If children misbehaved they would clean the test tubes for me. There was no formal work that they had to do. They were expected to make their beds and keep their rooms tidy.

Visitors

57. As a school for EBD children, we had very little contact with their parents who rarely visited the school. Given that many of the children had difficult home backgrounds where they may have experienced domestic violence, alcohol and/or drug addiction, this is perhaps unsurprising. I am sure many of the children felt unwanted and angry about their rejection, a major factor in their behavioural problems. In the late eighties, when the school changed to a day/boarding school for children with dyslexia it was a very different picture, with parents being interested in their children's progress.
58. Social workers and psychologists would visit the children. They would take them out if they had reviews with the social work or educational psychologist. That was part of Richard Russell's responsibility, our residential social worker.

Review of Care/placement

59. We had quite frequent reviews with educational psychologists. The school became much more open when it became a dyslexia unit. A lot of children, when they got to the age of sixteen, had had enough of the institution and wanted to leave. If there was a supervision requirement there would have been a need to review that, but I cannot recall being involved in any as a teacher.
60. As SNR I had meetings with parents and educational psychologists to review children's education, either in the school or at their local education offices.

Discharge

61. When a child was ready to leave, KVV and Richard Russell must have been involved in some form of future planning. When I was SNR I tried to set up work experience for some of the children before they left the school. We would try to have a fairly smooth transition for the child.

Living arrangements

62. The PE teacher, Mr Campbell and Richard Russell didn't stay in the grounds of the school. Richard Russell stayed down in the village and Joe Campbell lived in Saline. All the other teachers had accommodation within the school compound.
63. Every member of staff could potentially enter the children's accommodation area. There were members of staff who lived in the school in addition to KVV. As well as those teachers, one member of care staff would sleep in the school during their shift. The school wasn't secure. There were no doors locked. Anybody could walk in, but we were fairly remote.

Discipline and Punishment

64. While I was a teacher at Lendrick Muir, discipline and punishment was carried out by the individual teachers. If the child had been misbehaving in their class then the teacher would decide whether to keep the child in during break or make them do some chore. If it was something more serious they may tell them they couldn't take part in the activities. That teacher would then take the child and just supervise him doing something in the classroom, some kind of extra work. So, there was that kind of disciplinary arrangement that was left, as I said, to the individual teacher.
65. Disruptive behaviour could result in a punishment. This would be a serious disruption, not just talking in class or something like that. Anything that was disrupting or upsetting progress in class. There was no formal policy or guidance given on discipline and punishment. As far as I was aware no senior child was ever given the responsibility of disciplining or punishing another child. The extent of their responsibility would be being the head of the table in the dining room but they weren't in charge of mealtimes. There was always a teacher and a member of the care staff there, quite often more adults than that in the dining room. The dining room could be a source of confrontation occasionally over the distribution of food and you would have to have someone responsible there to make sure it was shared out fairly.
66. The children were never physically punished to my knowledge and there was no corporal punishment. **KVV** was a Quaker and he did not believe in such punishment.
67. Segregation was used as a punishment. As I said, if a teacher thought that a child had misbehaved seriously enough, then that teacher could take the child away from all the others. We didn't have formal time out.
68. We had a daybook at the school and punishments were recorded in it. Any misbehaviour or any problems were recorded in the daybook. When staff came on duty they could read through it and see what was happening. It was kept in the staff room. If anything significant happened in class or at mealtimes it went in the daybook.

69. When I became SNR I would say I dealt with discipline and punishment similarly. I was keen to make sure the school was running properly and orderly and I would work with all the staff to ensure that that was happening. I would know what was going on and so would all the other staff. It was a small unit and we worked very closely together. There was still no corporal punishment when I was SNR and things were still recorded in the daybook.
70. Some teachers may have taken boys into the games hall and made them run around a bit. Do some physical exercises. That's the only other punishment that I can think of.

Restraint

71. Restraint was only ever used if a child was becoming aggressive. I remember I would hold children if there was a fight going on. There was an area where children would congregate at break times, and sometimes a fight would break out, but not very often. If I was on duty I would step in, separate them and take the one I thought was causing the fight down to the study and make him sit quietly and calm down. I would perhaps say he had to come back after school to do something in the laboratory, something like that.
72. If there was a fight, as I said, I would step in and hold one of them by the arm or shoulder and move him away from that confrontation. That would be the extent of the restraint. If he was so angry that he burst away from me then I would just let him go and wait for him to calm down and come back.
73. There was never any training given to staff in respect of restraint. I know now there should have been. I have to say that it was very rare that you needed any type of physical intervention. It only happened occasionally. As a result of having to be restrained, no child was ever locked in a room or anywhere at the school. Medication was never used as a method of restraining a child. I never saw what I would call excessive restraint being used on a child. If that was going to be necessary the member of staff would call on others to help, but I can't remember any incidents as bad as that.

Concerns about the institution

74. Lendrick Muir was never the subject of concern, within the institution itself or to any external body or agency, or any other person, because of the way in which children were treated.
75. SNR I had concerns that the quality of the accommodation was gradually becoming unsuitable. I would have liked to have seen, if it could have been managed, individual showering facilities. However, given the financial circumstances at the school that wasn't really a practical thing to do. We just couldn't afford it. I know special schools now are charging much higher fees than we were charging at the time. That was my main concern. The school wasn't built as a school and having three floors did make managing the children difficult. It did keep me very fit, going up and down the stairs. But it would have been ideal if we could have just moved into a purpose-built building. Basically, it was becoming outdated.
76. Children would make complaints about staff. I'm sure they would make complaints about me. It was just, perhaps, because they weren't getting away with things. I think we were looking after the children as well as we could.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

77. There was no formal procedure for making a complaint, but the children could certainly complain to myself or KVV. Our doors were always open and children quite often came in to talk to us about things that they thought were unfair. We would see if we could sort it out. As I said, I considered the matron's room a very important resource for children to go to a talk about any concerns they may have. Mrs Bissett, or whoever the matron was at the time, would report that back to KVV. So, there were channels. A lot of the kids had close relations with certain members of staff and when they were taking them on camping trips, hill walking or any other activity they would use that as an opportunity to say anything and talk to the member of staff about their experience of the school. If the member of staff thought that any complaint was genuine they would take it to KVV or myself. I might even get the child in and have a chat about it.

78. The main outcome would be that the child had been listened to and saw that, if appropriate, their complaint was acted upon. I can't recall any particular complaint against a staff member. There may have been, I'm sure there probably were and I would have spoken to the member of staff about it, but I can't remember anything specifically.

Trusted adult/confidante

79. As I said, the matron, or Richard Russell, the residential social worker, were there if a child needed to speak to someone. Richard wasn't always in the school but we could take a child to see him if he wanted to speak with someone that wasn't part of the teaching establishment. My door and KVV door were always open and there were teachers who had close relationships with some of the pupils. So, there were a number of people they could speak to if they wished to.

External monitoring

80. I think in my early days there was a short inspection of the school. I seem to remember there were inspectors in the school for a couple of days. I don't remember another inspection until I was SNR and we had quite a lengthy inspection. That must have been about 199█, maybe 199█. They looked at all aspects of the school, mealtimes, the classes, the accommodation, and overall, I think we came out of it as satisfactory. The inspection included speaking to the children, staff and parents. They gave questionnaires out to the parents and children to complete in confidence.
81. We received feedback. They made recommendations, particularly with regards the accommodation, which I mentioned earlier. I think there were slight concerns about some safety aspects where the building was concerned. There were no concerns about recruitment, there may have been some about staff training, but I can't recall anything in particular.

Record-keeping

82. Everyone had access to the daybook that I mentioned earlier. In respect of record keeping, we had the teacher's assessments of the children, we had reports and there were records kept on the children's health care. Any medical issues would be recorded and every six months or so their height and weight would be measured. There would also be twice yearly reports sent to parents on the academic progress of their child.
83. Records wouldn't be kept in relation to complaints made by children unless KVV or I thought it was something serious or noteworthy. It would be reported to the educational psychologist or residential social worker. I can't actually remember any specific examples of that.

Abuse

84. As far as I know there was not a definition of abuse when I was at Lendrick Muir. I never saw any abusive behaviour by the staff while I was at the school and no child ever reported being abused to me, or to anyone else to my knowledge.
85. I can be fairly confident that if any child was being abused or ill-treated it would have come to light at or around the time it was occurring. I couldn't guarantee it, but I would be fairly confident because of the close relationships all the staff had with each other. Anything we didn't think was appropriate I'm sure we would have recognised it.
86. From one of the Inquiry witness statements that has been shared with me, it would appear that abuse did occur and go undetected and I didn't recognise that at the time, so I must accept some responsibility for not being aware of that. We didn't have any particular policies. Children went into members of staff's accommodation and it didn't raise any alarms with me at the time because it didn't occur to me that anyone would abuse a child in their room. From what I've read in that witness statement, abuse didn't actually occur in the room, it occurred when he took the child out of school. KVV may have had suspicions, I don't know. Perhaps I was rather naïve.

Child protection arrangements

87. I don't think there were any particular instructions on child protection arrangements. We weren't given any guidance, staff or managerial staff, on how children at the school should be treated, cared for and protected against abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour towards them. Whether from staff, other adults, or other children.
88. I wasn't given any instruction on how to deal with any reports of abuse or ill-treatment. If it had occurred I'm sure I would have consulted KVV. When I was SNR I'm sure I would have reported it at committee meetings.
89. I was given a fair bit of autonomy in respect of dealing with any reports, but I think as a responsible parent and in charge of a lot of children I would take that sort of thing pretty seriously, even without any guidance.
90. Looking back, I'm sure things could have been improved. There should have been more guidance and there should have been more training given to improve awareness of the possibility of abuse. I'm sure that is common practice in any kind of institution now.

Allegations of abuse

91. I was never the subject of an allegation of abuse or ill-treatment of a child or children who resided at Lendrick Muir when I was there. However, I was arrested two years ago and questioned under caution. A former pupil called [REDACTED] alleges that I persecuted him. I don't know exactly what the persecution amounted to, that was not made clear to me. Presumably, he was talking about picking on him and unfairly treating him. I think he said something about getting him out of bed every night, something like that.
92. So, I was arrested. It was a very unpleasant experience having spent my time at Lendrick Muir trying to do the best I could for the children, I felt very upset about it. I drove up to Perth police station to be interviewed. It was a Detective Sergeant Clark

who carried out the interview. I have not heard anything more from the police. It was a very humiliating experience.

93. That was the allegation he made against me. It was almost exactly two years ago and I've heard nothing at all since then, either from the police or the school's solicitors, Clyde & Company. I did call them up and ask, about six months after the interview. The person dealing with it had left the company and the solicitor I spoke to knew nothing about it. I've still heard nothing about it.

Investigations into abuse – personal involvement

94. I have never been involved in any investigations by or on behalf of Lendrick Muir into allegations of abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards children, both as a teacher and SNR [REDACTED].
95. Casting my mind back, there was a complaint by one of the parents of a dyslexic child. The complaint was that a maths teacher had unfairly treated her son in class by making him do extra work, or something like that, when he was clearly not able to cope with it. I spoke to the teacher involved, Mr Sneddon, and I spoke to the parent and she was quite happy that it had been resolved.

Police investigations/ criminal proceedings

96. I have never been involved or become aware of police investigations into alleged abuse at Lendrick Muir, other than the interview referred to above. The only time the police were involved in anything was when children ran away. The police would bring them back and briefly talk to KVV [REDACTED] or myself, asking if there were any particular concerns.
97. I have never been involved in any criminal proceedings involving alleged abuse at Lendrick Muir or given evidence at any trial. I am not aware of any person who worked at the school being convicted of the abuse of a child or children at the school.

Other Staff

KIT

98. KIT started at Lendrick Muir the same time as I did. He taught French and was very involved in the outward-bound activities, setting up the Lendrick Muir Munro Club. As far as I'm aware he was a very good teacher, well respected by the pupils.
99. I knew KIT well but didn't socialise with him a great deal, apart from a few games of squash. We were rarely on duty together in the evenings or weekends so I didn't see him interacting with the children out of class. As I said, he was keen on skiing as well as hill running and orienteering and involved some of the children in those activities, for which he was well respected.
100. I did not see KIT disciplining children, nor did I see him abusing any children or hear of him abusing any children.

MKF

101. MKF must have come to Lendrick Muir about 1978 or 1979. Isobel Urquhart had died and I think he was her replacement. I don't really know how old he was, I think he was a bit younger or a similar age to me. He took the junior children. He was a loner. He had a room and stayed in the school and I think he would go home at weekends when he wasn't on duty. My contact with him was fairly limited. He was a brilliant pianist. He played the piano at our assemblies and he was astonishing. He was in charge of the juniors and would do the basics of English, reading, arithmetic, that sort of thing.
102. I did hear him disciplining children. The room he taught in was right next to the lab and quite often I would hear him raising his voice. So, I did think he had a bit of difficulty, but he never asked for any help. I didn't actually see him disciplining any children, I just heard the raised voice. I didn't see or hear of him abusing any children.

KVV

103. I knew KVV very well. I got on well with him. As I have said, he was known to everyone as KVV. He was SNR when I started at Lendrick Muir and he retired in 1981. I think he was ninety about three years ago. He occasionally taught some French classes and was probably very good at Latin from the way he spoke. He was very good with the children. He had a very open personality. Everybody respected him, and as far as I know, liked him. He was a very nice guy. He had three children, they all lived in the school, in the flat above the others. He was charismatic.
104. I never saw KVV disciplining children. He was very laid back. I only heard him raise his voice to a child once, because they weren't listening to him. I never saw or heard of him abusing any children.

Mr KDF

105. KDF isn't a name I'm familiar with at all. I have never heard of anyone of that name at Lendrick Muir when I was there.

Mr KDG

106. The late Mr KDG was a similar age to Mr KVV. I think they came to Lendrick Muir together from a school in Yorkshire. He had been at the school a few years when I arrived, he was well established. He was a very good maths teacher, as I understand it. He looked after the girls' house with his wife and that was always very well run. Again, he would work very long hours because he would be on duty down at Craigard every night. He would only get one weekend off in three as far as I can remember, so a very dedicated member of staff.
107. I knew him very well. I used to play golf with him. He was very good. He was very good with the children, very sensible. He was a down to earth Yorkshireman. I don't recall seeing him involved with any sort of disciplinary action. He was so well established

and part of the furniture, he didn't have to do anything like that. I did not see or hear of him abusing any children.

Allegations that have been made to the Inquiry about me

MWK

108. MWK has given a statement to the Inquiry. I only vaguely remember MWK. He wasn't someone who stood out in my time at Lendrick Muir, but I do remember him. On page 14, paragraph 57 of his statement, he has said, *"The games hall treatment was quite famous. It was done at the request of staff members, so in a sense it legitimised any other interventions that the older boys chose. If some kids weren't sleeping or messing about after lights out, staff would get the older boys to take the whole dormitory down to the games hall for a punishment. Staff wouldn't be there so there were no controls on it. The kids would be made to run round to use up energy, but there were physical punishments as well. People were injured in the sense they had bruises and minor cuts, but nobody was ever taken to hospital."*
109. The boys were taken to the games hall sometimes, if they wouldn't settle at night, if they were disrupting the bedroom. I can only speak for myself, because I wasn't there at other nights, but when I was there, if I took them down to the games hall, it was me that took them. Nobody else. I never involved senior pupils in any kind of punishment. I would make the boys run around to use up energy, to tire them out. It wouldn't be for very long because the games hall, particularly in the wintertime, was pretty cold and that was sufficient for them to want to get out pretty quickly. So, it was a very short period, it was just a demonstration that they had to settle down. Certainly, when I was there, nobody had bruises and minor cuts, so I do not accept MWK comments.
110. I don't think the passage of time has affected my recollection of what he is alleging. I think his recollection is very misleading, very exaggerated. From reading his whole witness statement, nothing was right at Lendrick Muir. He seems to have hated every minute there and everybody there apart from one member of staff. He mentions earlier

in his statement how he was drinking heavily but such drinking would have been noticed. I think that's grossly exaggerated as well, but if he became an alcoholic, as he says, then I think his memories could very well be very distorted. If a child was treated in the way he has described that would be totally wrong, it would be unacceptable.

111. MWK [REDACTED] goes on to say the following on page 5, paragraph 18 of his statement, "SNR [REDACTED] was KVV [REDACTED] *I think there were twelve to fifteen teaching staff. ... was called ... The other teachers were Joe Campbell, who taught games, Brian Smyth, who taught art, KMN [REDACTED] who taught science, ..., who taught music and took a lot of the younger kids before they started preparing for O'Grades, David Simmons, who taught geography, Claire Walker, who taught biology, ..., who we called ..., taught maths and Kenny Speirs, who taught English. Some of the teachers were there forever but quite a few staff came and went. They were all qualified teachers. I was aware of that because I think that had not long happened, before that I think some of the teachers were unqualified.*"
112. There's no justification for saying that at all, I don't really remember him from my classes, but he does say later in his statement that he never went to science.
113. On page 14, paragraph 58, he goes on to state, "*I was in the science lab one day when I was about fourteen years old. I was asked to do something. I did it, but I think I did it in a truculent manner. I didn't swear and I wasn't obstructive. KMN [REDACTED] grabbed me by the hair and pulled me across the bench I was sitting at and across the classroom. He pulled quite a lot of my hair out in the process. I don't know what was going on in his house for him to react like that, but he did. I was upset about this and asked for the police to be called. ... The police were not called. Instead I was isolated from the others for some hours whilst SNR [REDACTED] persuaded me not to report the matter. He said that if I did report it then I'd be removed from Lendrick Muir School and placed in a List D school.*"
114. I don't recall that at all. I don't remember any such incident with him. Again, if there was an incident, and I have no recollection of it, I think he's grossly exaggerated it. But

I can't really comment because I don't remember it. As far as I remember, but as I say, very vaguely, he was a quiet loner and I didn't really have much interaction with him at all. I never sanctioned, punished or abused [MWK]. The passage of time has not affected my recollection of what has been alleged. If something like that had happened I would remember it. I can't explain why these things have been said. I agree, if a child was treated in the way described that was abuse. I put it down to very distorted memories, distorted possibly by his heavy drinking, for which he states he was later sectioned after leaving school.

115. He goes on to say on page 20, paragraphs 81 and 82, "When [KMN] pulled me by the hair in the science lab, I asked for police to be called. [SNR] came to speak to me. I was taken away from the rest of the kids and taken to [SNR] study. My recollection is that I was in [SNR] study for hours while [SNR] explained the folly of calling the police. He told me that if I called the police to report this, the only thing that could happen would be my removal from the school, pending an investigation. He said I would be taken to the List D school in Montrose, because that would be the only place that would have me."

116. The threat was that I could report this assault to the police if I really wanted to do so, but I would come off worse for it. I maintained that I did want the police, but over a period of time they broke me down with their arguments. They asked if the person apologised to me, whether it would be enough. I had to settle for an apology rather than being able to report the violent assault to the police. I think the apology took place in [SNR] study. [SNR] was involved in that. He knew what he was saying, he knew what had happened and he made every attempt to hush it up. He didn't want the police coming in."

117. I don't remember any such incident involving [KVV] as alleged by [MWK]. If a child had been treated this way I agree it would constitute abuse. I am very upset that [MWK] should make such an allegation against me. Several years after he left school, he visited [KVV] and made no complaint against me.

118. In his version of this alleged incident, he plays down what he may have done in the lab, I don't know, but I can't really comment because I don't remember it at all.

KIS

119. KIS has given a statement to the Inquiry. On pages 9 and 10, paragraph 54 of his statement, he has said, *"I ran away a lot, more than twenty times. This was because of the bullying. I just kept doing it again and again. As a result I missed a lot of school. ..., or ..., KMN would turn up at my house. They would drag me kicking and screaming back to the school. This would lead to beatings from the other pupils when I got back."*

120. He continues on page 10, paragraph 59 of his statement, *"Another time when I ran away KMN came to my house. I grabbed on to a pole with my hands when he tried to drag me away. My dad peeled my fingers off the pole."* On the same page, in paragraph 60, he continues by saying, *"Every time I ran away I fought to stay at my house. This caused my mother to lose her temper with me. She said I had cried wolf for the last time and was sending me back to school the next day. I called the school myself and spoke with KMN I tried to ask him what he was going to do about the bullies. He just replied that I should be at the school. I don't know if my mother believed me after this or not. In any case I had to go back to school."*

121. I do remember one occasion I was asked to bring KIS back to school. I can't remember doing it more than once. I remember that one time because it was a rather difficult evening. I arrived at his home fairly late in the evening. I think I'd already been on duty and Mr KVV, KVV, asked me to go and bring him back. When I arrived at his home his parents were very anxious that he should go back to school. I then remained in their living room for at least an hour, possibly longer, before his father, who was arguing with him, told him he would have to go back to the school. His father helped me take him, as KIS says in his own account. He was struggling. Once he was outside he calmed down and he was very quiet on the way back to school. He also alleges that I removed his jacket and shoes and that I didn't care about his bullying. I'm sure I didn't say anything about not caring about his bullying. I'm sure I

would have put what he said down in the daybook and I would have spoken to KVV about it. I think, because it stands out in my memory, that was the only occasion I had any problems with KIS. I thought we got on reasonably well. And that's all I can really say about that incident.

122. On page 10, paragraph 62 he refers to the removing of his jacket and shoes when he says, *"In the winter my jacket and shoes were taken from me by KMN. This was all to stop me running away instead of trying to stop the bullying against me."*
123. I don't have any recollection of taking any clothes off him. I don't remember that. I don't think I would have done that. He went on to say, on page 11, paragraph 63, *"One of the boys, ... saw this is as a weakness and stamped on my feet. I started swearing and KMN heard me. He gave me a right rollicking for swearing. I asked him what he was going to do about my feet being stamped on. He said he didn't care about that."* I completely deny that.
124. It was very unusual to physically remove a pupil from their house. That's the only occasion I remember doing it. It was a pretty dysfunctional home and they obviously couldn't cope with him and they didn't want him to stay there, so he had to come back with me.
125. I don't remember him wanting to report being bullied. I don't think the passage of time has affected my recollection of what he is alleging. As I said, it was an unusual event, so it is something that I do remember. I think he was very upset at the time and he might have genuinely thought that he did say those things. I found KIS quite a likeable lad, from what I remember and I think he was just very angry with his parents, very angry with me and perhaps, not making things up, because I think he believes what he is saying, but I don't think it's very credible.
126. Do I think taking him out of his family home constitutes abuse? I had to get him back to school, and as I said, he stopped screaming as soon as he was away from his parents. We must have had a bit of a conversation on the way back to school. So, I don't think taking him from his home was abuse, but if I said to him, "I don't care about

your bullying and I don't care about others stamping on your feet", well that just wouldn't happen.

127. I quite liked **KIS**. He got quite keen on cycling. I remember him talking to me about riding his bike and how much he enjoyed doing that and as I said, we had conversations like that that were quite innocuous and friendly. He was just a quiet lad. I cannot remember punishing, disciplining or abusing **KIS**.
128. **KIS** goes on to say in his statement on page 13, paragraphs 78 and 79, *"One day when I left the crush hall I was called back by ... He told everyone that was there that I liked the band "The Police". The next thing I remember was a lot of boots laying into me. I was also punched in the face. I got away with sore shins and stomach.*
129. I saw **KMN** who saw the state I was in. He stopped me and I told him what had happened to me. I was forced back to where the bullies were. **KMN** asked them if they had did what I had said. They all denied it. **KMN** asked me if I was making things up again. As a result of this I ran away. When I was taken back from my house. Three of the boys involved in the kicking, and ... turned up along with This was clearly for intimidation."
130. I don't recall that incident at all. It's a long time ago, but I just don't remember this incident at all. He clearly felt that he was a victim and perhaps he just wanted to blame me for the way he was feeling. I don't know why he is stating that I was forcing him back to where the bullies were and that I decided to totally ignore it. I can't accept that. I accept that if a child was treated in this way that would be abuse. If he had told me about the bullying incident I'm sure I'd have done something about it.
131. One of the interesting things that **KIS** does say, which is in complete contrast to **MWK** who in his statement says that there was a walk of shame for bedwetters taking their wet bedding up to the laundry and it's interesting to see that **KIS** says there was no walk of shame and that all the staff were very good. There seems to be a contradiction there. Surprisingly, **KIS** visited the school and **KVV** several times

after leaving Lendrick, on one occasion cycling from Edinburgh. He made no complaints.

██████████

132. I have read the document sent to me by the Inquiry in relation to ██████████. Like KIS ██████████, I don't remember ██████████ very well at all. I don't remember actually teaching him, I'm sure I must have done, but I can't remember that. I remember he was very keen on going out into the estate. I think he was looking for magic mushrooms. He used to wear, which was fashionable at the time, a big, long trench coat down to his calves. That's all I really remember about him.
133. I'm sure I must have had cause to sanction or punish ██████████ but I can't remember. He was a teenage boy. He could be quite troublesome I think, trying to get these magic mushrooms. Other than that, I never really had much trouble with him. As I say, I only have a very vague memory of him. If I did sanction or punish ██████████ it would have depended on what he was doing, but it would have been similar to what I have said earlier, some menial chore in the laboratory, something like that. I did not abuse ██████████. I have read the allegation against me that I allegedly physically or mentally abused him on approximately fifty occasions when he was a pupil at Lendrick Muir. The allegation is nonsense. The passage of time has not affected my memory of what is being alleged.
134. I have a letter from KVV ██████████ which I received after I was interviewed by the police in relation to ██████████. In it he says, "Re ██████████ I've been feeling a bit guilty leaving you to fight your own corner. When you called I couldn't see any way in which I could help, my memory being what it is these days. However, last month I was entertaining two former pupils and their wives, from the 1960's, and in preparing for their visits I dug up some old stuff and came across an item which could help you and which does not depend upon my powers of recall. This was a booklet. I kept it in the early days of retirement, recording visits from former pupils. I notice that said ██████████ had paid me a visit about 198██████████ and had nothing bad to say about you or the school."

135. So, he had every opportunity to mention it to Mr KVV then but there was no mention of it and yet there were allegedly fifty physical or mental abuses. I'm very angry about that. It is completely untrue. I don't know why he would say it and then not mention it to KVV when he visited him. If I had mentally or physically abused him on fifty occasions that would be appalling.
136. I also received a letter from Mrs Bissett, shortly after I was interviewed by the police. She says in it, *"Hoping that you are not too upset about this ridiculous charge. I have thought and remembered so much about the wonderful staff and the life for us all there. I do hope you and [REDACTED] are able to just get on with your lives. I am so angry with this ignorant pupil we tried to help."*

Leaving Lendrick Muir School, Rumbling Hill

137. I left Lendrick Muir in 199[REDACTED] because I was exhausted. I had been there twenty[REDACTED] years as teacher, SNR [REDACTED] and SNR [REDACTED] and we'd had a report saying that the school was satisfactory but mentioning quite a lot of things that needed improvement, especially about the accommodation and I really didn't have the energy to carry it on any longer. I decided it was time to leave.
138. I didn't ask for any references when I left the school. I think I must have had one from the committee as I was a supply teacher for ten years, so I would have needed references to get on to the list of supply teachers, but I can't remember any. Unless the authorities just contacted the school direct.

Helping the Inquiry

139. My only explanation as to why such allegations of abuse have been made is that some of the pupils that came to us were seriously disturbed and that they have made allegations to perhaps excuse themselves that the school must have been so terrible that they apparently gained so little. So, they have a resentment to the school and they have made wild allegations, particularly against me.

140. These allegations really hurt because I spent twenty [REDACTED] years trying my best to help some very difficult kids to achieve, and to have this thrown back at me over forty years later makes me very upset. I'd also like to say in relation to these allegations, I have had many visits from former pupils, who have come to our house, some of them with their own children, to say how much they appreciated their time at Lendrick Muir and I think we did a very good job with a lot of the pupils. Not all of them, some of them didn't seem to benefit, but a lot of them did benefit, and a lot of them come back to say how grateful they were for their time there.
141. It's not just their time at Lendrick Muir that has continued to affect those and impact on their lives, I think it's their whole background. Particularly [REDACTED] MWK [REDACTED], I was probably rather naïve in not noticing he was being groomed. We didn't even know the word groomed in the 1970s and I was only a junior member of staff at that time. I was only in the school during the evenings once or twice a week, so I had little idea. Obviously, I think it's very regrettable.

Lessons to be learned

142. I think lessons have been learned from all these schools where really significant abuse took place that we've read about and seen on the news on the television. I think a lot of lessons have been learned. Particularly in relation to making sure there are proper policies in place, people recognise what is expected of them in a much more definite and well-defined way than we did forty-five years ago. I think authorities have learned the lessons that they need to have much more involvement in any kind of residential setting in terms of regular inspections to make sure that what the school is supposed to be doing is actually happening.

Other information

143. 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.

KMN

Signed.....

Dated..... 01 July 2025