

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

RDQ

Support person present: No

1. My name is RDQ. My date of birth is 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before boarding school

2. I was born in a tiny little village called , which is between and . I was born in the house. was the name of one of the family estates and the village was named after the estate. There are literally seven houses off the main road.
3. My mother's name was and my dad was called . My mother never worked as far as I know. She is long deceased. My dad is also long deceased. He never worked either, he was mentally ill. He left the navy either just before or just after the war and he never worked. He was manic depressive.
4. I have two sisters, is eighteen months younger than me, and , who is four years younger than me. I have an older brother called . He is two years older than me and I have a half-brother called , who is sixteen years younger than me.
5. My mother was a drunk and she smoked. She didn't care about her children. I used to get the bus to school when I was aged four, when I went to nursery school. That was from the house to Helensburgh, which was seven miles away. I then had to get from the bus stop to the school, which was a second floor flat. I had to cross several roads.

Today that would be totally unacceptable, so, I learnt to be independent at a very early age.

6. My mother would come to the bus stop to meet me on the way back. She would flag down the bus if it didn't stop. One time it didn't stop and she had to chase it in the car. I remember that. I'm pretty sure she was always there when I came home from school. This was public transport, there were no school buses.
7. I was a happy child because I was very outgoing, an extrovert. I was born to a very old Scottish family, so early on there were no problems in respect of money. I was well fed at home until my parents divorced and my mother moved to England. I was eleven when this happened. She initially moved to Surrey, then Sussex to get as far away from my father as possible. Everything was paid for by my grandparents. My mother was provided with a house, a car, a TV, everything. She didn't have to lift a finger. But she was always complaining that she was bringing up four kids by herself and she was pretty frugal. She would buy a quarter pound of mince and put two pounds of carrots in it. So she was frugal, even though my grandparents were paying for everything, but she had her cigarettes and alcohol. These took priority over us.
8. During school holidays we were kicked out of the house first thing in the morning and were told not to come back until lunch time. After lunch we were kicked out again until it was dark. It was very distant parenting. My mother never hugged me. My relationship with my father was almost non-existent. He would lie in bed until 1pm, get up and immediately start drinking gin and orange. We had a petrol station, which my grandparents bought for my dad to give him some kind of employment, income, but he had a manager that did most of the work. I only ever remember going to the cash and carry with him, other than that there were staff that ran the shop. He just lounged around drinking.
9. When they divorced, I stayed in Scotland and during the school holidays I lived with my grandparents, so I basically grew up with my grandparents from the age of eleven onwards. My dad was kind of like a family friend who would come to lunch on Sunday. That's the only time I saw him and he was always very distant. It was very weird

parenting. My grandfather was [REDACTED], a retired admiral, who was [REDACTED] for Scotland and Northern Ireland. He was [REDACTED] of the British naval fleet in the 19[REDACTED]'s, so a very important man.

- 10. Larchfield school was the only decent school in the area. There was Keil in Dumbarton but I don't know if they had a prep school. [REDACTED]

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

### Larchfield School, Helensburgh

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### Leaving Larchfield School, Helensburgh

64. I was put down for Glenalmond school at birth by my parents, but I'm sure my grandparents had an influence. They paid for my entire education. They paid for everything, which I then had to pay back out of my inheritance. Along with every car, TV, food that my mother bought. It was all added up, split between four and it came out of our inheritance. My inheritance was minus £17000. So, in the end I paid for my own education and I paid for my mum's stuff, even though she wasn't even there. It was very strange but that's the way they set it up. But I did get a flat, which came out of that, so it wasn't all bad.
65. I thought I was going to Glenalmond but I failed the common entrance exam because academically I was absolutely useless. I was so lazy. I sat it when I was thirteen and still at Larchfield. I'll never forget it because I had head lice and I spent the whole time sitting this exam, scratching my head. It was really hot that summer and I remember the head lice falling on to my exam paper. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
- Secondary Institutions - to be published later
66. At that time Fettes didn't care about academics. If you could play rugby they wanted you. I went for the interview and all they asked me about was rugby and at the end of it they said they would take me. I can't remember who interviewed me, it wasn't anybody that I had any interaction with later on. I can't even remember if it was done person to person. It may have been done on paper. It may have been some form.

There wasn't a common entrance exam. They would have had my results from the Glenalmond exam and reviewed them.

67. I was told I was going to Fettes by my mother. It was basically, "We need to go and get your uniform, you're going to Fettes." I knew I was going to public school, but I wasn't entitled to an opinion of where that would be. You did as you were told. I never questioned it. We went to the school outfitters in Glasgow. It was possibly called Forsyth's. I got my school trunk and my Fettes brown and purple striped blazer, which I still have, and all that stuff. It all came home with us and my mum sat and put the name tags on, berating me all the while because of my long name, as if that was my fault.

### **Fettes College, Edinburgh**

#### *First day*

68. I was known as <sup>RDQ</sup> [REDACTED] at Fettes because my mother thought my name was too long to stitch on the name tags of my uniform. Everything has been changed now as I was extremely upset about it, so they will know me as either name. I remember my first day at Fettes very well. I was totally lost. The building is huge and it's symmetrical. You could split it down the middle and fold it. It's exactly the same on both sides, there's an east and a west. It's extremely confusing, they looked the same, the classrooms are all the same, the dormitories are all the same. Everything is the same, going up five floors. Compared to Larchfield, which was tiny, Fettes was enormous.
69. I was in School House, which was in the main building. I felt like a minnow in a pool. I was very scared and very disorientated. I came [REDACTED] late for some reason. I can't remember why, but all the other people had come [REDACTED] before and were already friends. I was a newcomer. I went into third form, the first senior school year. They do have a prep school there, but it was very small. Subsequently my daughter went to prep school there for a year.

70. I joined in the [REDACTED] term, [REDACTED] behind all the people in my year. I was fairly able to assimilate. We all had our own little groups. On my first day there were school trunks everywhere, I didn't know what to do or where to go. There was no guidance at all. You were literally thrust in and expected to figure it out. There were no boys at Fettes, you were all men. That was a term used by Anthony Chenevix-Trench, the headmaster. You were expected to behave as men at aged thirteen. I was the smallest guy in my class.
71. In the very first week they had compulsory boxing. We're going back to 'Dickensian times'. You were thrown in a boxing ring. I'd never seen a pair of boxing gloves, never mind putting one on. I was put in with a boy who was about my height but he was older than me and one of the master's sons. He beat me to a pulp before they stopped it. He had already been boxing for a couple of years. There were staff there. It was compulsory. Everybody had to do it. It was character building. I just remember coming out with a bloody nose. I didn't know what to do. I had never even seen a boxing match.

### *Structure*

72. Chenevix-Trench was the headmaster. He is a well-known abuser and drunkard. He was the headmaster at Eton and they kicked him out because he was a non-conformist. He wanted to get rid of the Eton uniform and all that kind of stuff. One of the first things he did at Fettes was to make the wearing of the school blazers only for special occasions. We all wore tweed jackets. He was the overall 'king of the kingdom'. He was very aloof and we didn't have a lot of interaction with him generally. I probably had more because he knew my grandfather, so he knew exactly who I was.
73. The housemasters were the next level. The housemaster for School House when I joined was a chap called Dave Pighills. His nickname was 'Snake'. He had a dog called Snipe, a black labrador. He was a very eccentric character. He was only there for the first two terms I was there, but in that time he had discovered some of my background. Spike was a gundog and he would come in with a couple of pheasants and he would

shove them in my chest and say, "You know what to do with these, get them plucked and gutted." He knew I came from a shooting, fishing type family.

74. There were two separate houses for sport at that time. College West and College East. I was on the west side. At that time it was purely for sports. It had originally been two separate houses, but they amalgamated to become School House. College West and College East was just for rugby and cricket and all that stuff.
75. Fettes began admitting girls when I started, but there were only about twenty girls. There were five hundred boys. I think there were around a hundred in School House. There was School House, Moredun, Kimmerghame, Carrington, Arniston and Glencorse. That was the houses. These other houses were all stone built houses within the grounds. Each house had around a hundred boys and their own housemasters. We didn't have a lot of interaction with the other houses. The only time we saw kids from the other houses was in class and you didn't tend to hang out in class with people from other houses. I did have one particular friend from Glencorse, we used to sit at the back of the chemistry class and not work, muck about. But other than him, you didn't really interact with other houses. It was very secular.

#### **Routine at Fettes College, Edinburgh**

76. Dave Pighills was replaced by the next perpetrator, the next abuser, CHV [REDACTED]. His nickname was CHV [REDACTED]. He was ultimately called CHV [REDACTED] all the time but his actual nickname was CHV [REDACTED]. He was six foot seven inches tall. A very imposing man. EXM [REDACTED] was the assistant housemaster for School House. We called him EXM [REDACTED]. EXM [REDACTED] stood for EXM [REDACTED].

#### *Mornings & bedtime*

77. We all slept in dormitories. There were multiple dormitories in School House. The whole of Fettes at the time was stone floors. The junior dormitories were open dormitories with no partitioning and the windows were always open because of smelly feet, etc. So, in the winter it was absolutely freezing and you got out of bed onto a

stone floor. We would get up about 7:15am. We had to be at breakfast by 7:30am. If you weren't there by 7:35am you didn't get breakfast and you were given 'LE' which stands for Lines Equivalent. It meant instead of lines you would get punished. This was the main source of bullying. There was a fagging system at Fettes disguised as this LE system, but it was basically fagging. You would have to report to a prefect and they would dispense the punishment. This could be anything from going to the far gate, picking up a pebble and bringing it back, while the prefect would watch on as you did it. You could wash their rugby shorts, polish their rugby boots, write an essay on the inside of a ping pong ball. All sorts of creative, many abusive, forms of punishment that were certainly derogatory. Another thing was washing their underpants, stuff like that.

78. LE was the punishment for anything, any misdemeanour. You could be given LE in class by a prefect or a teacher. They both had the authority. The teacher would delegate LE to the prefects. Teachers didn't punish except for caning. They would tell you that you had to report to a certain prefect for your LE. You weren't assigned to fag for one particular prefect, you got all the prefects at different times. Some were much worse than others. You never got lines to do. That was the whole point, it was lines equivalent, so there were never any lines. It was specific to Fettes as far as I know. Some of the other schools had fagging, but they were trying to get away from the term fagging and pretend that it wasn't that. Even at that point it was becoming less acceptable. People were beginning to realise it was a bit of an abusive power.

#### *Mealtimes*

79. At the time, the food at Fettes seemed ok. It was lacking in some things. We had our tuck boxes with supplies from home. My grandmother was always very generous with my allowance. We had a tuck shop that we could go to and buy stuff. Vesta meals were popular then, boxed curries and things, before Pot Noodles were invented. We had our own toaster and a little kitchen where you could make toast.

### *Clothing*

80. You wore your uniforms when you went out on Saturday afternoons. I don't ever remember having my own clothes at Fettes either.

### *Bathing/showering*

81. I remember one of the teachers showering with us. Looking back on it, I thought that was really weird. I don't remember his name. I recall he was foreign, like Australian or South African, something like that. He looked to be in his thirties. He was the only one who did it.
82. Other than that, we showered in a communal shower, no stalls or anything. There would be six of us in a line, on both sides. The showers were never hot. Showers were in the mornings or evenings. You always had to shower in the evening. After rugby they had plunge baths.

### *Schooling*

83. I would say on the whole the quality of education was very high. There were a few exceptions. We had one guy, his nickname was Sid Prune. He was my maths teacher. He was very weak. We used to make a fool of him in class and he wouldn't fight back and burst into tears. It was only later we found out he had been in a Japanese concentration camp and they had peeled his face, which is why he had this wrinkly face and we called him Sid Prune. It's when you look back, you see how horrible you were. What that man must have gone through. His actual name was Sidney Brewer.
84. We went to different classrooms for different subjects and there were a lot of subjects. We were at school six days a week. During the week we had tea about 5:30pm and then prep, which went on until 9:00pm and when you were more senior it was until 9:30pm. So prep was long, but we skived it regularly. The prefects would do rounds, checking on you, but we all had our own little rooms with a desk and your personal belongings. So, we would all go in there and pretend to be working. My school reports

from Fettes were abominable. "Could try harder", "Never listens in class". I was the worst possible student, in fact I was a horrible child all round to be quite honest.

85. Academically, all I wanted to do was avoid working as much as possible, so we used to skive all the time. It was a ritual, habitual occupation. We skived all the time. In class we would sit up the back and not pay attention. Chapel was the best time to hide. One of our study's had a turret, which we had a huge mattress in, on top of trunks. You could get in underneath and we would hide in there and block it off. If you came into the study you couldn't see anybody, so we would hide in there. Chapel was every morning, twice on Sundays. Chenevix-Trench usually took chapel along with the school chaplain, David Weeks.
86. Fettes comprised of all these turrets, with tiny little rooms, study rooms. Everybody had their own study, so as you got older you got a better study, until you got to sixth form, where you got study bedrooms. I never achieved that. I was always in dormitories, but as you got older the dormitories became 'cubiced', until you got an individual cubicle.

#### *Sporting activities*

87. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays were half days for sport. School would finish at lunchtime and after lunch you would play rugby or cricket in the summer. We played hockey and we had a swimming pool. I did sub-aqua, canoeing and abseiling. I did every conceivable activity that I could. We did cross-country running, which is the only thing I didn't like. Athletics was compulsory. I excelled at sprinting, long jump, high jump, all that. I was very good at field athletics.
88. I was never big enough to be good at rugby. I was always in the third fifteens. But I loved rugby. If you didn't play rugby you had to watch the first fifteen. If they were playing away you had to watch the second fifteen. There was always a rugby match on what was known as 'big side', which was the main pitch.

89. I loved all the sports. We did all sorts of outdoor activities. We also played squash, fives and tennis. Fettes was very much sport orientated back then. They didn't really care about the academic side at all. Their academic ratings were pretty low back then, whereas now it's all about academics. They compete very highly with other public schools.

*Leisure time*

90. There were all sorts of clubs, chess, drama, that sort of thing. We did the Duke of Edinburgh award. That was up in the Pentlands. You had to do so many miles to get your gold, silver or bronze.
91. We didn't have much leisure time. After prep it was almost bedtime. We did have a TV. We were allowed an hour of watching TV a week. Sunday was very much a religious day and that was also the day you were allowed leave. You could arrange to go out. I would either go to my aunts or I'd take the train to Dumbarton and go to my grandmothers for the day and come back at night, or I'd go with friends. You could go to a friend's relative. I did several excursions to friend's houses.
92. Leave had to be granted, you had to apply for it. You had to have a leave slip, it was all very official. We would still be wearing the school uniform. The only thing we weren't allowed to wear was the school blazers off school grounds. The blazer was like a flag and the kids from the school across the road, Broughton, would recognise it and if they surrounded you, you were in trouble. You would get a good beating. So, we were supposed to blend in wearing our sports jackets, but how many fourteen year olds do you see walking around in a sports jacket, trousers and a tie. I didn't get beaten up out of school, so I guess it worked to a degree.

*Combined Cadet Force (CCF)*

93. There was CCF and you could choose what corps you wanted to go in to. With my naval background, I wasn't going into the navy, I wanted to go into the army. So I joined the army CCF. I quite enjoyed it. It was very military, with lots of square bashing.

Your boots had to be spit and polished to a very high shine. We actually did an army camp as well, which was really cool. We got to fly in helicopters with the regular army through the mountains at sixty feet. They stopped and we all jumped out with our guns, which we had blanks for. I grew up around guns. I started shooting when I was twelve.

### *Healthcare*

94. We had a 'San' which was short for sanitorium. It was a hospital wing right at the back of the school. It was run by a full time doctor and a couple of matrons. All schools had a matron, but I think those at Fettes had a higher degree of nursing. Right at the start of going to Fettes, I suffered terribly from headaches. This was put down to me having a squint, but I think it was the start of me having photophobia. I had to go to the San every night to get my medication. I had to go down these pitch black corridors, I was petrified. I would run down these corridors thinking someone was going to jump out in front of me. It was probably a seven minute walk roughly. It was quite traumatic for me then. I was a small boy. I had to run down, pick up my medication and run back again.
95. I was also admitted there when I was about thirteen. I had stomach pains. I was rushed off to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary where I had my appendix taken out. Back then I think I stayed in hospital for about ten days. So I spent all of my school holidays convalescing from appendicitis.

### *Religious instruction*

96. Religious instruction was forced upon us, nonstop. We had chapel in the morning. Fettes had their own chapel that was attached to the main school house, on the back. So we would have chapel every morning, then we would have church on a Sunday. It wasn't optional. Everything was mandatory. They did a head count for church because you were going off campus, out of the school grounds and back. They wanted to be sure nobody had sneaked off.

### *Bedwetting*

97. Again, there was one kid that wet his bed every single night, all the way through school, right up until he left. They would collect up the sheets and change the bed. I'm sure they had some kind of rubber sheet over the mattress. You could smell that kid from a mile away. He was a complete pariah, nobody ever spoke to him. I can't remember his name.

### *External Inspections*

98. There were no inspections of the school to my knowledge. I never saw anything like that.

### *Prefects*

99. The headmaster chose the prefects. I left before I could become a prefect. When I was going to become a day-boy, Chenevix-Trench had me at his house. He sat me down and said, "The grass is always greener on the other side." He told me he had great plans for me and that one day I would be head boy. It was all because of my grandfather. They were only associated through friends, because my grandfather would never be associated with a drunk like that.

### *Visitors*

100. My dad came once. He turned up in a TR7, which he had borrowed or was test driving, or something like that. He had a gin and tonic perched on the dashboard. He drove up the drive of the school and I went out to meet him. He threw the keys to me and told me I was driving. He did this all the time from about the age of thirteen he would have me drive him home from the pub in Helensburgh. I was thirteen or fourteen when he visited me at Fettes. That's the only time he ever came to the school. My mother never came to Fettes.

### *Family contact*

101. Every week you had to write a letter. It wasn't quite as stringent as the prep school. You were left more to your own devices. They didn't read your letters, you were allowed to seal them and post them yourself. They encouraged that. They had a post box. I think there was a certain time during prep one night when you would do letter writing. I think my grandmother used to write to me occasionally.

### *Career guidance*

102. There was career guidance at Fettes but at that point I didn't know what I wanted to do. They did that in fourth form. I don't remember if they had any suggestions for me at the time.

### **Abuse at Fettes College, Edinburgh**

103. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later I think I was caned twice by [REDACTED] CHV and once by [REDACTED] EXM. I was also caned once by Chenevix-Trench. That was for a terribly heinous crime. I was on leave and at my aunt's house but she wasn't there. I was told where the hidden key was and told I could make myself a sandwich. I hit the drinks cabinet, pouring a pint of mixed spirits and downing it. I was thirteen and ended up in Murrayfield, my head between railings, unconscious. My friends managed to get me back to school. I would have been expelled if my grandfather hadn't stepped in. That was when I got my beating from Chenevix-Trench.
104. At Fettes they didn't make you drop your trousers, but there was a lot of leg stroking beforehand from Chenevix-Trench. He was famous for that. We all wore long trousers at Fettes. He would sit you down on the sofa right next to him and he would stroke your thigh. He was always drunk and the smell of alcohol was overpowering. He would then cane you, I think I got four strokes of the cane from him. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

105. EXM was an evil bully. He treated all the boys like we were worthless. First names were never used at school but he preferred to use derogatory nicknames rather than your surname. He would stomp around, shouting and intimidating us. We were all petrified of him. He also used the cane. I think it was actually more than once I was caned by him.
106. CHV was essentially a quietly spoken, gentle man and the beatings from him were even less painful than those from Chenevix-Trench. But that's not where the abuse came from. I don't know whether it was my appearance or my character, or what, but he took a personal liking to me. Right from when he took over as housemaster he made me his personal alarm clock. I had to go and knock on his door of his private quarters and he would tell me to come in. He told me to come to the side of his bed and he would then pick me up and drag me across his body, rubbing across him from outside of the bed. This was right at the start of my time at Fettes, when he became housemaster. At the time it felt like a friendly, fun thing, but looking back it was sexually perverse, without a doubt. He was under the covers and I'm sure I'd still be in my pyjamas as it was the first thing I had to do when I got up. We weren't allowed to wear underpants under them. He didn't do it to anyone else. Just me. I think this went on for a couple of years. Once I got older it stopped and some other pupil got the job. I have no idea who it was.
107. CHV's famous thing was, that as soon as you took your underpants down to get ready for bed he was there looking at you. He would literally hang about until you turned your back then he would come over to take a look. He would be staring at your genitals. He had a reputation for it.
108. The housemaster of Moredun had the nickname 'RDU', because he had a reputation for climbing up and looking at people while they were using the toilets. It's not something I experienced because it was a different house. I don't remember his real name.
109. There was a teacher, who seriously assaulted one of my friends. That was all over the school. Of course, they swept it under the carpet and he was shuffled off to

teach somewhere else, as they did back then. I can't remember his name. I'm sure there would be abuse allegations against him because my friend was seriously abused. My friend's name is [REDACTED]. He was sexually abused by the teacher. Fondling and masturbation, that kind of thing. It was all over the school and the teacher quietly slunk off.

110. Bullying was rife throughout the school. I was bullied from day one from a group my friends and I called '[REDACTED]'. There were about six of them and they were all tough kids. They were the year above us. They would flush our head in the toilet, hang us by our feet over a banister five floors up. Both of these things happened to me. They would beat you, all sorts of things. I don't remember their names. I blame the school. The school were 100% aware. We were bullied, kicked and punched. My friends and I would keep out of their way at all costs.
111. My nickname at school was '[RDQ]'. The bullies either called me '[RDQ]' or '[RDQ]', all the time. '[RDQ]' was because they said I looked like a [REDACTED] with a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. But the bullies called me '[RDQ]' or '[RDQ]'. At the time I didn't know what that was. I looked it up when they started calling me it. It came from my surname. Even though it was '[RDQ]', the '[RDQ]' part was turned into '[RDQ]'.

### **Reporting of abuse at Fettes College, Edinburgh**

112. The staff were told, but they weren't interested. I told '[CHV]'. I wouldn't tell '[EXM]' because he would have back handed you. I don't really remember '[CHV]'s reaction when I told him of the bullying, but nothing was ever done about it. Actually, I'm not sure if I told him, whether I wanted to tell him but was too scared of the repercussions. It's a bit fuzzy. I don't think I did tell him. But they were well aware that there was bullying. As they were about the fagging. It was institutionalised by the school. Sometimes the fagging and bullying was relentless and it got very depressing.

## Leaving Fettes College, Edinburgh

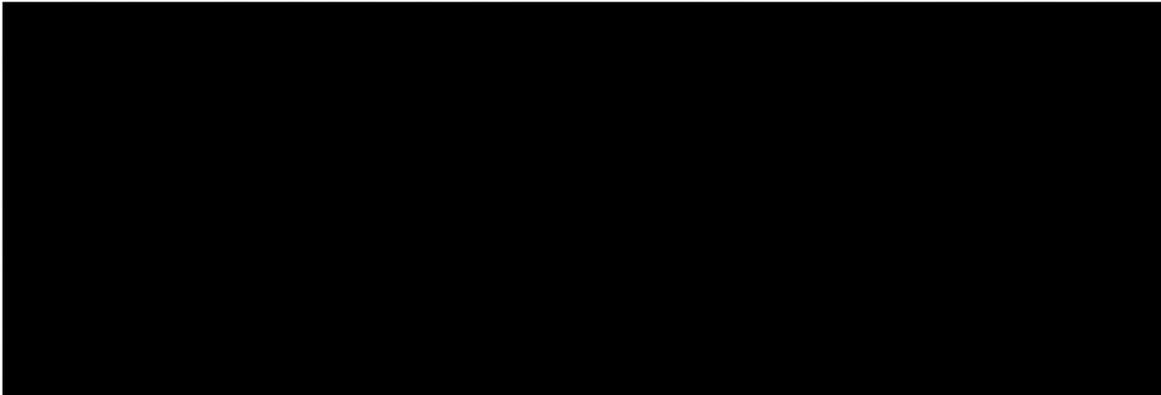
113. I never made it to sixth form. I escaped basically. I became a day pupil in my last two terms. Then I didn't want to go into sixth form. One of my best friends, [REDACTED], became [REDACTED] day pupil at Fettes. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]'s family lived up in Merchiston. He said I could live with him and be a day pupil too. My grandparents agreed to it and [REDACTED]'s parents were happy to have me as a guest, so I became [REDACTED] day pupil for my last two terms. I stayed with them and we were driven to school every morning in Mr [REDACTED]'s Jaguar. He was the managing director of a company. Once I got a taste of freedom that was it, I wanted to get out. I just wanted to get away from the abuse and the bullying. There were only [REDACTED] of five hundred boys. Fettes didn't approve of it at all. They were a boarding school.
114. I did my Highers and then I left. I managed to convince my family that I would go straight to the navy and I left school a year early. I took a year off and went to Australia, then I went before the naval board in Portsmouth for the interview. I passed the interview, the physical and medical tests. I went before the board and the Commander on it had worked his way up from the deck and the first thing he said to me was, "You've been pushed into this by your family" because I would have been fifth successive generation naval officer. So, they turned me down and told me to come back the next year. I'd already been to tutors to get my maths and physics as I'd failed them miserably, so at this point I thought, 'I've had enough'.
115. Two weeks later I joined the merchant navy instead and two weeks after that I was at sea. So, as it is I was fifth generation seaman and my son is sixth generation.
116. Overall, I did enjoy my time at Fettes. I was very sports orientated, I had a good group of friends, we had a lot of fun, but it would have been a whole lot better without the abuse. It's something that has been repressed all these years.

### **Life after boarding school**

117. As I said, I left after fifth form and took a year out. I went to Australia for a year, which was the 'done thing' back then. I worked on a dairy farm and in the outback as a jackaroo, which was an incredible experience. It's an Australian cowboy. The cattle station I worked on was the size of Scotland. I came back and went straight in to the merchant navy after I had my board interview.
118. I spent four and a half years at sea as a junior navigational officer and went all the way round the world in both directions. I went to twenty-seven different countries. Unfortunately, shipping was in decline. The Ben Line had thirty-two ships when I joined and they were down to twelve when I left. I was four and a half months at sea then four and a half months at home. While home I worked in a pub at night and in a bookmaker during the day. I was on sea pay, which was a very small amount of your actual pay.
119. I was a navigational officer and they sent me a letter saying that after my training they couldn't guarantee me a job. So, I left and retrained. I started on my entrepreneurial career and started off my own photography business. I had multiple businesses over the years then moved to Florida. I've been doing my merchant mariner stuff over there pretty much since I moved, as a boat captain. I still do that and will till I 'drop over the side'.

### **Impact**

120.



121. My time at the schools has definitely affected me in the background for sure. I've always been seen as a little bit eccentric. My ex-wife was nineteen when we met, I was thirty-five. We were married a year later. She accused me of taking away her youth. We were married for over thirteen years and had three kids together. So, it wasn't all bad. I wouldn't say my experiences have ruined my life because I have managed to repress them. Everything got blocked and didn't reappear until recently, which doesn't make what happened to me any better or worse, but fortunately I don't consider it to have ruined my life.
122. We sent our daughter to Fettes prep school when she was eleven. She was only there for two terms but she didn't like it, so we immediately pulled her out. It was completely co-ed by that time. She wasn't abused, she didn't like it because she didn't like being away from home. At the time, what had happened to me didn't even occur to me. She's forty-one now, so it was a long time ago.
123. I still think about my time at the schools. I still dream about it constantly. I do have bad dreams. More so now that it's unblocked. I saw something on Facebook and I put a comment on that. A woman responded and asked if I was ever abused at Fettes. I said at the time that it had been fine, then it all came flooding back. I started speaking to this woman on a private chat and she said I should contact the Inquiry. A friend of hers had also been at Fettes and went through the same thing. I don't know the name of the woman or the person that had been to Fettes.

### **Treatment/support**

124. I have not had any support or treatment over the years. Growing up there was no such thing as anxiety or depression. Obviously my dad was a manic depressive, but I didn't find that out until years later. I've always been fairly confident I'm what would be described as an alpha male. I'm the kind of guy who takes control of situations. A lot of that is because of my school background and how we were taught to be independent and how to fend for yourself. That was a positive aspect. But the abuse side of it, the beatings and stuff, at the time we just thought it was normal. It happened to everybody and we just thought they were entitled to do it. That was what they were there for and

corporal punishment was a completely acceptable thing. Of course, now we know that's not the case. I never smacked my children. My mother used to beat us with a Scholl sandal on the bare behind and that hurt. She was a horrible, vindictive drunk.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

125. I have never reported the abuse I suffered at [REDACTED] Fettes to anyone. The only person who knows about it is my girlfriend. None of my family know about this, none of my friends. I've been married twice and I was engaged to a girl but I've never spoken to anybody about my time at school.

### **Records**

126. I have a couple of school reports from Fettes, other than that I don't have anything.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

127. [REDACTED] It would be nice to know in today's climate this thing could never happen again. I don't know if what I've told the Inquiry has any bearing on that, if it's going to help in any way. It was obviously all a long time ago. I still feel [REDACTED] Fettes is still there, should be held accountable for that kind of stuff. They were ultimately responsible for my care and they failed and they should be held accountable for that.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

128. Back in my time at the school there would be a whole raft of recommendations for [REDACTED] schools to implement but they are all irrelevant now. Proper vetting and all that kind of thing didn't exist back then. There are much better structures in place now that would help them weed out those that shouldn't be around children. That was a huge failing. Not just on the part of society, but on the part of the schools themselves. They had a responsibility to care for children. [REDACTED] Fettes was more caring but there were huge cracks through which these predatory

paedophiles slipped through and caused damage and upset and long term issues for many people like myself.

**Other information**

129. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed RDQ .....

Dated... *25<sup>th</sup> August 2025* .....