

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PCM

Support person present: No

1. My full name is PCM. My date of birth is 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I'm an adopted child. I was adopted with my twin sister, into the family that brought me up. That was and , who was known as . We were with them from when we were five months old. My brother, mum and dad's natural son, was three years older than me. also went to Edinburgh Academy, but he was not the subject of any abuse.
3. Home life was very good. We grew up in Corstorphine in Edinburgh and I would say life was very normal, even fortunate. My mother was a teacher of remedial or special needs children in a comprehensive school in Edinburgh and my father was a partner in a law firm in Edinburgh.
4. Childhood times were great, a very normal home. We had a couple of pets, holidays in the Scottish Borders and my childhood at home was fun, it was nice. My sister and I were always given the same love and the same opportunities, even though we were adopted. There was never any differentiation made, and I know that can happen, which is deeply tragic, but I feel we were all given everything the same.

5. My dad was a lawyer and a large proportion of people that come out of Edinburgh Academy end up in the legal profession, indeed, at least six of my peer group are now senior partners in legal firms. I think it was an expected route although I only found that out for sure when I did a Subject Access Request about a month ago. I got something very interesting back which also corroborated me receiving corporal punishment and other things.
6. My sister went to St. George's school which was again one of the options open to parents. If you had a boy at Edinburgh Academy the chances are the daughter would go to St. George's. If you had a boy at Watsons or Daniel Stewarts, chances are the daughter went to St. Margaret's. It was the normal thing for that type of family in Edinburgh.
7. My brother did start at Edinburgh Academy three years before me, but I didn't have that much knowledge of the place before I started. I do have memories of my life before school, but they are quite fragmented and they're probably more likely to be created or almost resurged by seeing a photograph or memory or smell. I don't remember my brother ever coming back from school and telling me what it was like. I would have been too busy at playgroup or nursery.

Edinburgh Academy

8. I was five when I started at Edinburgh Academy. I went to the school in September 1971. I was always a day pupil.
9. I don't remember my first day, but I remember the regular journey to and from school. I can remember being taken by my parents in the car and then being picked up after school. Once I got to a certain age, probably about ten, I can remember getting the bus to and from school with my brother, who would have been thirteen and responsible enough to look after me.

10. In my time at Edinburgh Academy there were three separate school buildings. A school we only ever referred to as Denham Green, the prep school at Arboretum Road and the senior school at Henderson Row.
11. Lawrence Ellis was the rector of Edinburgh Academy during my time there. He must have been aware of the abuse that was ongoing and for him not to have called it out, makes him utterly complicit. He was an odd character who had this particular way of scurrying around the school buildings. He was always carrying this ridiculous briefcase and he was one who always wore the old-style black cape. Hamish Dawson was another who always wore the black cape.
12. There was also a deputy rector and there would have been heads of department as well. The deputy rector would probably have been based on the next longest serving teacher. I cannot recall any names but there has been a bit of questioning on whether or not some of these senior teachers had their own levels of PTSD having come out of the Second World War. Many didn't know what to do for a career and just went on to teach.
13. As far as teachers go, I believe some hadn't even been through teaching college and there was definitely the broad spectrum between the 'nut-jobs', the seriously scary or stern, and the rest, some of whom were kind and some of whom were just ambivalent.

Denham Green

14. Denham Green was effectively a large residential house in the Trinity/Goldenacre area of Edinburgh. It had belonged to a merchant family in Edinburgh called the Salvesen's. They owned a shipping company and bequeathed this house to the school after their children had gone through the school. It was used for primary one and primary two and some children were also sent there for kindergarten, which I wasn't. I believe Denham Green ceased to exist sometime in the eighties.
15. Denham Green had entirely female teaching staff. Together with the prep school at Arboretum, it formed what would have been called a junior school in other places.

Edinburgh Academy just separated out the first few years from the other four years of junior school.

16. Denham Green was a very nurturing place and I have lovely memories of school there. SNR [REDACTED] at that time was a lady called Miss IPK [REDACTED]. They were happy days and I'm actually still in touch with my primary one teacher, Joan Murray, a lovely lady.
17. These are the sorts of people who probably genuinely didn't have any clue about any of the abuse. They were totally separate and would probably only ever meet the other teachers whenever they got together for a social or pre-year beginning meeting or whatever they called it.
18. There was an anomaly at Edinburgh Academy as we had six primary years then you started senior school with your first year being called the 'Geits.' You then went on to second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh years. Traditional schools would normally have seven junior years and then your senior years up to sixth year.

Preparatory School – Arboretum Road

19. After Denham Green I moved up to the next part of the junior school, which was the prep school at Arboretum Road, on the edge of Trinity and Goldenacre.
20. I had four different year, form or class teachers there. The first one was a lady called Mrs Fowlie, she was lovely. Her husband taught maths at the senior school. He was one of the good guys. Then in primary four I had a lady called Elizabeth Baxter. She was firm but pleasant and was just old school. There was no violence or abuse or anything like that. She was more like a granny, she would wag her finger at you and you would know the boundaries.
21. Going on to primary five again I had a great guy, Ian Sneddon. That was a year where some less fortunate people went to John Brownlee or a guy called Major Ramsay. I don't think Ramsay was a serious problem and I didn't have a lot to do with him but he was ex-military and always used his military title. He wore military ties and you didn't

do anything out of line with him. However, I do think he had all his marbles in the right place and didn't suddenly lose it and start doing what some other people did. Sixth year at prep I had another great guy, [REDACTED] IJW

22. James Burnett was the head who oversaw both Denham Green and the prep school. All the teachers from both schools would have reported to him. He was also one of the good guys, but, looking back retrospectively, I do question that he might have possibly been aware of the abuse and turned a blind eye, but I don't know. My view might be skewed because I was very close to his son. We were born on the same day, were in the same year and we formed a close bond throughout our schooling at the Academy.
23. To the best of my knowledge James Burnett has become quite reclusive since the Inquiry began. I used to send him a letter every five years, just to say hello, but he didn't reply to the last one, I think maybe for his own preservation. I think he's kind of 'battered' himself down and maybe feels some remorse.
24. Class numbers at Denham Green and Arboretum were quite small. I have all my report cards and they show class sizes to vary between about nineteen and twenty-three. There were four classes in each year group which was quite common throughout school. Therefore about 80-100 per year group throughout school. In the junior school, your class mistress would typically teach three or four subjects and the whole class would be taught together in the same classroom. If you were getting taught something like science that would be in a separate room. We were fortunate enough to have a science classroom, even as youngsters. It was all very good fun and certainly felt adequate at the time.
25. There were more divisions as you went through the school, so you might have a class with a class master where you would do a roll call in the morning before you were all broken up. People with better ability would then go into what we called sets (i.e. Set 1, Set 2 etc).
26. I've never actually thought about the ratio of boarders to day pupils but we were split into houses for things like sports and competitions. One of those houses was just for

the boarders and we had four houses so, from that, I'd say the ratio was about 25% boarders. There were very few boarders at junior school, a handful at most. I moved to senior school at eleven and there were plenty of boarders then.

27. I didn't have anything to do with the boarding houses when I was at junior school but I did in senior school. I had lots of friends who were boarders so I would go in to see them and some of them would come to my family home for weekends. My parents could sign them out and take responsibility. It gave my friends a bit of a change.
28. There was an aptitude test to get into junior school but I don't remember anything for going on to senior school. Equally, I was given a prize leaving junior school for my performance so if there was any test to go on into senior school it didn't apply to me. I have my last school report from junior school and it was glowing.

Senior School, Henderson Row

29. The senior school was rather odd insofar as, in the very late 70's, they acquired the next-door property, known as Donaldson's. Donaldson's had been a teaching school for deaf children. That meant the Academy had two properties next to each other, the larger one being the original school, built in 1824.
30. The original building was effectively a large rectangle in a large plot of land. The frontage was the best part of 100 metres wide and it then went all the way back to Glenogle Road, which was about 120 metres. Within that area was the central building which was designed to look like a Greek temple.
31. I think there was an architectural competition between certain public schools at that time and that's why you have Daniel Stewart's looking as grand as it does and Fettes looking like a fairy tale castle. Merchiston was also a very grand ornate building, there's quite a lot of them dotted around central Edinburgh.
32. The central building was flanked on either side by the janitor's house on the left and the masters' lodge on the right. The janitor lived there full time prior to me coming to

the school, but when I was there it was used as the janitor's daytime residence. In the masters' lodge there was a bookshop where you would go to acquire books and supplies, but you also had the 'ephors' room in there. Ephors were what we called prefects.

33. On the left, running back from the janitor's house, were primarily classrooms. I could probably still name all the teachers who had those classrooms. The furthest back one was known as the 7th common room. When you got to 7th year you had a bit more latitude and freedom, and you had free periods with time between lessons so that room was for your free time.
34. On the right, running back from the masters' lodge, there was a subterranean office belonging to the bursar. The bursar was the person who had the financial purse strings of the school. After the bursar was the school library and an open area that was under a sheltered roof. There were school noticeboards there, where they would post announcements like who was on the rugby team, exam results and that kind of thing. After that there were four science blocks. That area has now been totally modernised but still serves the purpose of science.
35. At the back, behind the central block, but not joined to the run of buildings on either side, was the school dining room and school gymnasium.
36. There was a tunnel created between some classrooms which joined the main school building to Donaldson's once it had been acquired. Donaldson's was a typical Edinburgh built neoclassical building with large multi-paned windows with a Greek triangular frontage. There were steps leading up to the front door but most of us weren't allowed to go in that door. Pupils used a servant's entrance one floor down. The front door was for the rector or anyone on official business. Parts of Donaldson's were nice and parts were stark and terrifying.
37. On the ground floor of Donaldson's there were two relatively young male teachers. One was a Mr Drew who I remember very well. He was a geography teacher and would have been in his late twenties when I went to that school. I remember his late

seventies, early eighties fashion style. He wore flares and wide ties and had hair like Bjorn from Abba. He was a likeable chap, very engaging and very kind to children.

38. On the first floor of Donaldson's there was a variety of overseas teachers, who supplemented the linguistics departments. They were a variety of middle-aged ladies who taught French and German. They would only be there short term, a year or two on a swap or something and I would have been taught by them over multiple years because languages was where I was better.
39. Hamish Dawson was on the top floor of the Donaldson building. Every memory or thought about that is just horrible. I really struggle with it. I got Dawson in my first year, so when I was in Geits, when I went into senior school.
40. The boarding houses were all at an area near to the prep or junior school at Arboretum Road called Kinnear Road. They were actually opposite the entrance to the junior school and there were three or four boarding houses there. They were all named after people who had either been founders of the school or had some significant association with the school in the past. One was called Jeffrey house, one was McKenzie House, one was Dundas and I'm sure there was a fourth, which I can't remember.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

Clothing/uniform

41. At Denham Green, our uniform was black sandals, knee length blue socks, knee length blue shorts, grey shirts, a blue blazer and a blue cap. That uniform was the same all year round at Denham Green. When you went further up the school the uniform changed between summer and winter.
42. You joined senior school in September and wore what we called winter uniform. That was a grey shirt, which became a white shirt in fifth year, a blue and white striped tie, long trousers, black lace up shoes and a green Harris tweed jacket. In the summer,

the jacket changed to blue. We also had all these hierarchical things that were part of the pack mentality, telling you the pecking order and where you were in it. It was quite clever.

Mealtime

43. There was a dining area which was very nice in prep school. It was connected to the main teaching school by a corridor. When the bell went for lunch, we would all trot through this corridor into the dining area. It was cavernous but it was very nice. We had bench seats and long tables and you all sat in your class groups. Senior school was different and had a hierarchy all of its own.
44. My recollection is that food was served in big trays or dishes at the top of the table with a stack of plates. The teacher, or one or two nominated children, would then dish it out and pass it down. The food was alright, in fact there were meals we actually looked forward to.

Trips and holidays

45. Trips and extra-curricular activities were certainly encouraged. We had a lot on our doorstep as well, like the Botanic Gardens where you might go for a little nature course. We also went to Gullane beach in the school minibus where you might do some beachcombing or something like that.
46. At senior school we went to this outdoor centre up in the Highlands called Blair House. It gave people the opportunity to learn map reading skills, orienteering, camp craft and all those sorts of things. It was also used to teach you a bit more about biology and geography so you could go off and study the mountains and rivers. By the time you were doing your 'O' Grades or Highers you could often be sent there to do an intensive week with two or three teachers. If it was a subject, you were weak in, then it might be recommended you go there for a bit of extra one to one which might give you a better chance at the exams.

Schooling

47. I had some terrible teachers at Edinburgh Academy, and none more so than Hamish Dawson, but I did have some very good teachers as well. I wasn't academically brilliant but I wasn't academically at the bottom of the heap either.
48. I did have some really nice teachers who helped me a lot. It wasn't that they were necessarily aware of any abuse, but they just helped me get back on track after being with Dawson during my first year at senior school and my grades dropping.
49. My class teachers in senior school were Hamish Dawson for first year. Mr Sinclair, who was a lovely guy, in second year, Jimmy Hudson in third and fourth year. **IQT** **IQT** a nice guy, in fifth year. George Harris, who was slightly eccentric but nothing bad, in sixth year and Stuart Evans, who was a lovely man, in seventh year.
50. Other than Dawson, who was awful, the rest were pretty good. I also remember a language teacher I had, Douglas Bonnyman, who was a really great guy. There were lots of good teachers and nice, encouraging teachers, a couple of whom I'm still in touch with. In the main they weren't bad, there were just a few stray loose nutjobs.
51. Many of the teachers had nicknames, Hamish Dawson was known a 'Doughy Dawson.' I'm not sure why, but he was just regarded as a bit of a nutjob by everyone. Mr **ICL**, who taught **ICL**, was called **ICL**. Mr Harris, my sixth form teacher, was called 'Sticks,' because he was tall and skinny, and another guy, **IFP**, who was **IFP**, was called **IFP** from **IFP**, but no innuendoes just childhood humour.
52. In senior school I became very mediocre and while I could probably have done a lot better, I was dragging around some mental baggage with me. I had to sit my Highers twice but did come out with five so, while it wasn't quite where my parents might have expected me to get to, it wasn't the worst.
53. I have a copy of my end of first term report, written by Hamish Dawson, when I was in my first year. In it he says I was a '*pleasant and cheerful youngster who could and*

should heed the one or two of the warning notes in the annual report.' Nothing too shocking there. After the end of my third term with him he said, *'up and down like the proverbial yo-yo, he can be infuriating.'*

54. The under-performers went to Dawson and when he left the school the school magazine said, *'as a class master Hamish Dawson was a natural choice for the heaviest responsibility, care of the least academically able group of Geits,'* so we had all already been labelled as thicko's. Our parents got all that and we had been sent to what was supposed to be an uplifting school.
55. I had a difficulty with educational establishments and at the end of school I didn't end up getting into university. My grades only got me into a Polytechnic in London at that time, and I dropped out of there after one year.

Sporting activities

56. In sports I didn't excel, but I wasn't completely useless either. Participation in sport was encouraged and I absolutely believe there were groups of pupils who were almost untouchable. If they were either academically bright or one of sporting achievement then they were left alone. That's where my brother fitted in. He [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was a senior prefect, was first eleven for cricket, first fifteen for rugby, Scottish schoolboys running champion and went to Oxford, where he got two degrees. My brother was untouchable and then there was me.
57. I have photographs, that I got from Joan Murray, my primary one teacher, of school sports day at junior school. It was a massive deal. I understand that most parents are probably proud to rock up and see their wee boy having a go at a race or whatever but it was deadly serious at the Academy, even at that age.

Religious instruction

58. There was no association with church when I was at Edinburgh Academy. You do have to think about the demographics of Scotland at the time though. In the 1980's

Scotland was almost a purely white demographic with only a small Asian population within Edinburgh. However, during my time at school we did start to see an influx of children of other nationalities and skin colours. Racism was not prevalent in the school, possibly only because it was quite a new thing. It was almost as if that aspect of hatred and unkindness in the human makeup hadn't emerged.

59. We had an Irish Church of Scotland minister called Howard Haslett. He lived in a house on the senior school grounds next to Donaldson's. He may have been aware of the mistreatment of others but he wasn't bad. He was never abusive as far as I'm aware. He certainly didn't give pastoral care. He would do a couple of pretty duff Religious Education classes but I don't remember him doing much else. I don't know what he got paid for.

Pastoral care

60. I suppose we had the minister, Howard Haslett, but personally I would never have gone to him. If I had issues, during most of my years, I probably would have felt able to go to my form teacher. Certainly, from second to seventh year as they were all decent people and I feel that if I'd raised a problem, they would have done all that they could to help. I didn't do that but I think they would have done something.
61. There was another person, IDX, who I probably wouldn't have been aware of in my earlier years in the school, even though he was a very long serving member of staff. He was involved with careers advice. He was a decent chap, the sort you could always go to if you had a challenge. He would have been another one I would have reached out to.
62. There was no procedure, not in my day, of directing pupils where to go if they had a complaint or issue. If a pupil raised an issue in my day the response would have been 'Does the school want to acknowledge it and do they want to do anything about it.' If not then it would have been discounted, disbelieved and pushed aside.

Visitors

63. My parents came to parent's evenings, which were known as an 'At Home' at Edinburgh Academy. I've no idea why that was. The Academy had lots of weird names for lots of things.
64. Both parents were encouraged to attend and they would sit down and discuss what's good, what's bad, what needs to be improved, and so on. I would say my mother attended more than my father but my father did attend them when he could.

Family contact

65. I can't remember how many times per year there were parent's nights but it was at least once a year. The school was quite good at parental interactions, where the parents were encouraged to see what their money was being spent on and what their kids and other people in the school were doing. I do think that's an appropriate thing, if it's used in the right way, to encourage you up a bit. I can remember a lot of positives like that, it wasn't all doom and gloom.

Boarders

66. I was friendly with quite a few boarders in senior school. I was very close to one, [REDACTED], who was in my year. He was quite small and slight and the fact he was a boarder was actually really good for him because it meant he had his own pack to run around with.
67. Generally speaking, the boarders got picked on less because they had this hard-core group that they would go around with and they had a very different bond with one another compared to day-pupils.
68. I never heard anything particularly bad from [REDACTED] about life as a boarder but then again people didn't share anything. The psychological dynamics of a school or workplace are incredible. I don't think a lot of people actually analyse it but I have

spent a lot of time processing it with the assistance of psychologists and while I'm not at the end yet, some of that is starting to help.

Discipline

69. In the junior school there were teachers who would certainly use a plimsole, without question, and there were kids who got sent off to see the head mistress to receive a little punishment. I don't remember her being known as brutal so maybe it was more of a threat, the concept of being sent to the head mistress's office.
70. I wouldn't say it was as harsh as later in the school but everything is proportionate. The level of trauma on a six-year-old from a plimsole might be commensurate with the level of trauma on a fifteen-year-old receiving full corporal punishment. I never received any beatings or significant telling's off or anything like that in my younger years and I didn't ever see anyone being disciplined in junior school.
71. Up until 1979 the ephors themselves were allowed to administer corporal punishment. I think that was revoked [REDACTED] before I went to senior school because I went there in 198[REDACTED]. I have no recollection of them ever administering corporal punishment but it was still talked about in my day.
72. The discipline definitely all depended on who the teacher was. There were some strict teachers and people who were at Edinburgh Academy, even ten years prior to me, would have had a different experience to me. They would have had the ephors administering corporal punishment and more of the teachers would have had that post-war hardline authoritarian attitude. A lot more was just accepted and there were also the remnants of what was called 'fagging' in the boarding houses. Fagging was where junior pupils were made to undertake tasks for senior pupils and in its original form, I believe that included sexual abuse.

Bullying

73. There wasn't any bullying that I can remember at junior school. Certainly not that I was particularly aware of. Kids are kids, so I would try and segregate those behaviours into normal kids vying for a bit of one-upmanship and wanting to be king of the pack, versus, more systemic planned group or individual bullying and targeting which happened a lot in the senior school.
74. There was definitely a hierarchy at Edinburgh Academy and a survival of the fittest mentality. Some people have likened it to 'Lord of the Flies' and some have likened it to the African Savanna where you have the hunters and the hunted. To a degree the teacher and prefects would let you sort it out for yourselves because it was less grief for them to deal with.
75. I'm not blameless in all of this, I did sit in the middle of the heap. I got picked on by some and I picked on others. I must use the word bullied because I did bully other people. That was not acceptable and I have now reached out and apologised to others.
76. There was a huge amount of peer abuse at Edinburgh Academy. I suffered it more in my younger years when I was quite podgy. I did what most people would do who were at the lower end of the heap which was to just remove myself from any potential harm. There were known places for hiding out, the most notable being the school library. Nothing ever happened in there and there was always someone there to maintain peace.
77. It wasn't until I found areas that I was good at like sports and pastimes that I started to shape up which meant that more people left me alone. I started to get into weight training when I was about sixteen and people saw I was becoming a little bit stronger, a little bit more able, and certainly less podgy. I then started moving up through the rugby teams as well. That moved me up in the hierarchy and although it's shameful to admit, I then settled scores with most of the people who bullied me. Not a good thing to do but it kind of levelled things out a bit in my head. It's all too easy to wipe these things from your memory, you remember what was done to you, but you don't always remember what was done to others. I was reminded by one of my peer group that a

large number of us lined up one particular guy against a wall and threw stones at him. That was awful. That was the guy I reached out to and he took that incredibly well.

78. Anyone who was stronger than you would bully you, year group didn't really matter. There were some pretty bad things that got done. I can remember a guy in my year getting rolled up in a carpet and dumped in a refuse bin. He was left there for about half a day.
79. People were often chained to radiators and if the radiator was on that wasn't a great place to be. People were often put into large classroom dustbins. They would be kind of folded so their legs and knees were up near their chin, then the dustbin would be lifted onto a window ledge about four or five feet off the ground and if they struggled to get out they could fall and seriously injure themselves.
80. Another thing that happened was desks could be arranged in a line with all the lids open. A guy would then be held down on the first desk and people would hold his arms and drag him along the desks so that his head bashed into all the other desks. That would happen in my year group.

Prefects / senior pupils

81. Ephors, as they were known, weren't able to give corporal punishment and I don't remember ephors, at any stage in my schooling, outstepping their authority or being abusive.
82. They were usually just a bit carried away with being a bit pompous. A lot of them actually got to the position they were in because they deserved it. Some people may have been resentful of them, but I never understood that, as a prefect is normally a person who has been exemplary within their year group. They either excelled at sports, excelled academically or did something that merited an acknowledgement. I think they deserved it.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

John Brownlee

83. You would visually see John Brownlee grabbing people by the scruff of the neck. He was famous for getting into your shirt collar then applying pressure with his knuckles on the back of your neck. I certainly saw that on multiple occasions. Thankfully, I never had him as a teacher.
84. There was a raised area at the back of the prep school which had the primary five and six classrooms. I think they were originally built as temporary structures and were added to the school when it needed more classrooms. They looked like glorified portacabins and were painted light grey or white. You needed to walk between those portacabins to get to the brick-built building that housed the other fifth and sixth form classrooms.
85. So, all of the fifth and sixth form classrooms were in the one area and all of the third and fourth form classrooms were also in the one area. That then meant that you would often see the comings and goings of pupils and teachers between those areas and you would see Brownlee just grab someone and start at them.
86. When he did that, he became a vitriolic monster, shouting at whoever he had grabbed, belittling them and then applying this pressure on their neck. If he was going to do anything more than that it would have been done in his classroom.
87. Whilst I never saw what he did in his classroom I did hear about it. It's obviously second-hand information so I have to view that with a pinch of salt, although I'm sure the Inquiry have heard more about that from other people. I can only say what I actually saw.
88. Brownlee had a reputation within the school. He was fierce, at the very least, and very inappropriate in many of his actions. Even just what I've said that kind of level, meted

out against a kid who could be nine years old. It could be for trivialities, he would just fly off at the boys.

89. He never did anything like that to me but I saw it many times and you always had that fear of it happening to you. Brownlee was more likely to be outside the 5th and 6th year classrooms, so you knew areas of the school to avoid. There were actually routes we would pick through the school to try and avoid these potential pitfalls. Some people used to spend their spare time just hiding, in an empty music room or something like that.

Mr Dyer

90. At the Junior school there was a guy called Mr Dyer. He was primarily a squash teacher, I think. I can't recall him ever being a class master, but he might have been a primary five teacher.
91. Dyer wasn't shy in shouting and being physically aggressive. It was more his presence, his kind of style and body language. He would often lash out and kick people, that was his style. It always seemed a bit stupid because half the time he missed. It was more the fact that he was actually willing to kick a small child. He would just lose it, a bit like Brownlee although not as aggressively. If Dyer missed you that would probably be it, but Brownlee would have chased you halfway across the school to grab you, drag you back to his classroom and give you a beating.
92. I can remember seeing Mr Dyer kicking out at boys in the front playground. That was an area you would see him because it was between the school and the squash courts. He crossed that playground multiple times a day because the squash courts were his domain, apart from having a classroom.

Hamish Dawson

93. Hamish Dawson taught me from 198█ when I started in senior school. He was my Geits teacher, so my first year in senior school. He taught me history and I think he

also taught me some rugby. I don't know why but from the minute I started senior school I attracted his attention more than most. I was never far away from him. His reason for existing seemed to be to beat me, almost every day. I couldn't say, categorically, that it was daily but it was near enough.

94. He always beat me in public and no one ever said a thing, it was just accepted. He would just say "PCM, here," and get me to come out to the front of the class. He would have me bend over, place my hands on my knees, head bowed in shame, and then he would beat me with one of a selection of tools or implements that he had. He would also rub boys' bottoms and genitals from behind while punishing them. He did that to me and you wouldn't necessarily know he was doing that unless it was happening to you. He used to think it was all very funny. He had this very demonic look. I managed to put it all away for years and now I can't, it's with me all the time.
95. He actually had names for the tools and implements he used to punish the boys. The majority of the implements were canes, of varying lengths, school rulers, wooden paddles and of course his 'clacken,' the school's own implement. The clacken was a long heavy wooden spoon shaped implement which was used to play hailes, a game we played at Edinburgh Academy. He kept some implements on a shelf under his desk then he had some longer instruments that he kept in a kind of bucket thing, like an umbrella stand, in the corner of his classroom. I can't remember any of the names he gave to the implements but he did name them, the man was mental.
96. There were other people who were also subject to it but some people just escaped. He had this very demonic look. It was akin to what Brownlee was like but I didn't suffer both of them. I only ever saw Brownlee abusing others, although I do know people that, tragically, did suffer abuse from both of them.
97. I might have looked out the window or chuckled or smirked in class, something very trivial and that would be enough for him to beat me, and others, in front of the class. Anything could set him off and I couldn't escape him as he was my form teacher, my history teacher and for a short period, my sports teacher. Tragically, I also went on a school holiday with him, where he had access to me overnight as well.

98. We went on a week-long school canal holiday where the idea was that you would get to interact with boys of different age groups. There was a form put on the school noticeboard advertising the trip and if you were interested you had to get your parents to contact the school office to agree you could go and pay whatever the amount was.
99. I thought it would be fun and asked my mother and father. My father's view on school trips was that I could go on the nice ones but I then also had to go on the not so nice ones, that I might not want to go on. I also had to do well at school. I thought that was all fair enough and it gave me the motivation to try harder.
100. So, I was given permission to go on the canal trip but what I didn't know was that Dawson was the one running it. I also didn't know that Dawson selected who was going on his boat. Lo and behold I was on Dawson's boat.
101. I kept a log of the trip which I still have. We travelled by canal boat to Rugby from 27th August until 3rd September 1983. I have a memory of there being three boats and about 25 to 30 boys on the trip. There was one, possibly two teachers on each boat although I don't have a firm recollection of there being any teacher other than Dawson on our boat.
102. Dawson styled himself as '*The Commodore*' on that trip. He wore a seaman's hat and we had to address him as commodore throughout the trip. He really was a freak.
103. I recorded entries in my log for the first two or three days of the trip and they were nice, jovial entries and that I was enjoying the trip. My entries then stop, the log grinds to a halt and it stays like that until the end. That's because he started coming to my bed and fondling me. There was no contact for the first three or four nights, then he touched me every night thereafter.
104. It was quite a big canal boat, it had ten or twelve beds, and then two common areas, like a galley or kitchen at the front and at the back. There was a central corridor with

lower and upper bunks on each side. All the beds could be screened off with a little curtain.

105. Dawson, under the guise of saying goodnight to us would come and open each curtain and speak to each boy. That's when he would molest me. It was never skin on skin, he would fondle my genitals through my pyjamas. I was aware of him saying goodnight to other people, but because of the curtains you didn't see what he was doing with the other boys. He didn't say anything to me and I couldn't say if it aroused him.
106. I imagine he was getting some sort of homo-erotic joy out of it. I'm not a psychologist and analysing their behaviour some 35 years on is quite tough to do but for these people, typically, there is a driver. My guess would be that there was some enjoyment or stimulus for him. I don't think it was sadistic and about him wanting to inflict pain.
107. I went back home after that trip. I didn't tell my parents, it wasn't ever discussed with any of the other boys on the trip and that was my summer holiday in 1983.
108. Dawson then left the school in December 1983 which in itself was very weird. It's very rare that a teacher leaves a school partway through an academic year and, while this is only supposition and conjecture, I have heard widely from multiple people that it was because pornographic material was found in his briefcase. I don't know how or by whom and I don't know if it was child related pornographic material or of another nature, but that is a widely held story.
109. Another thing Hamish Dawson liked to carry out was something he called 'spifflication.' It was supposedly all jolly and was supposed to be tickling, but it was just an excuse for him to run his hands all over you. I don't think he regarded it as a punishment, it was just something he would do when he felt like it, when he felt it was the thing for him to do.
110. Hamish Dawson taught at Gordonstoun before he came to Edinburgh Academy. He taught underneath a guy called Kurt Hahn, who set up Gordonstoun and a lot of other educational establishments around the world. All of those establishments had a

particular approach to education and were reasonably authoritarian. I think that's where Dawson got his grounding.

111. I can say without question that I witnessed the abuse of others, certainly within my class. I can remember seeing Dawson physically manhandle a friend of mine, [REDACTED], and actually throw him across the classroom.
112. I don't have clear memories of other people being beaten, probably because I was either frightened before being beaten or tearful after. I have tried to think who was in my class to see if I can stir some actual memories but I can't, other than [REDACTED]. However, if you were one of Dawson's targets you were always one of his targets and it would have happened again and again.
113. A weird thing about Dawson was that he had this jar of jellybeans and he would sometimes reward you after he punished you. He would give you a sweetie afterwards, the stereotypical image of a paedophile. He was like the child catcher in the movie 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.'
114. None of Dawsons' punishment was ever recorded as far as I'm aware. None of it was regarded as formal punishment, the teachers probably thought it was just his eccentricity.
115. I also remember Dawsons' classroom being so stark, with a bare wooden floor, bare walls and regimented desks. His desk was raised on a platform at the end and we were all dramatically lower than him. Another psychological thing, a kind of fear thing with the teacher looking down on you. Not all the teachers maintained that, some of the younger teachers had their desks at the same level as the pupils. Dawsons' class was totally different to all the other classrooms.

[REDACTED] IBU

116. [REDACTED] IBU was the gym teacher. He wasn't really violent, I think he was more psychological and very intimidating and belittling. He constantly used inappropriate

words of unkindness, that is what I would say about IBU [REDACTED]. He displayed behaviours which nowadays would be wholly inappropriate and have you up on a disciplinary as a teacher. He would just say people were a "pile of shite," "waste of space," "fat," "lazy" all that sort of thing. If you didn't do well at rugby or weren't good at other sports that was his modus operandi, to make people feel utterly worthless.

117. IBU [REDACTED] also had this obsession with having boys from age eleven, right through to eighteen, doing gym in a pair of shorts without a t-shirt on. That was a bit odd but he would also then come down and supervise the showers. He would just stand and watch the boys in the showers and then in the changing rooms as well, while they were getting dressed. The showers were actually under a set of stairs and were very small and cramped.
118. IBU [REDACTED] had his office under another set of stairs to the gym. It was all very cramped and all very odd. I do have recollections of people going into his office and being 'slippered' but that never happened to me.
119. IBU [REDACTED] wasn't brutally unkind to me. I was podgy and not very able in my teens but I became a lot more physically active in my later teens which meant his focus was off me and he'd go for other people. He was looking for vulnerable easy targets.

Lawrence Ellis

120. I was given full corporal punishment by Lawrence Ellis on one occasion, but it was on Hamish Dawson's instruction. The punishment is actually recorded in my school records. It states in my records that in December 198[REDACTED] I was age 11, I was punished by Mr Ellis, and that it was sanctioned by HDD, which is Hamish Dawson, who had caught me fighting another boy.
121. That punishment was six of the best with the clacken. I've no idea why Dawson didn't punish me himself, he was doing it almost every day anyway. It was usually the cane with Dawson which you did kind of get used to and I suppose the cane wasn't as

traumatic as getting sent to the headmaster's office, waiting on a chair outside and being summoned in. That was all very ritualistic and very psychological.

122. The clacken was also more brutal, it was a hell of a level of pain to inflict on a young boy. I can't remember if it was on my bare skin or on top of my trousers but I remember I had bruising on my backside for several weeks after that. I told my mum it was as a result of a rugby accident so I don't think my parents were made aware of that. My father would certainly have asked what it was all about, and I have no recollection of that ever happening.
123. The punishment was always given just before lunchtime so you also had the shame of walking into the dining room for lunch all red faced with tears rolling down your face. You couldn't have lunch with your peers, although you couldn't sit down anyway, it was so painful. Everyone knew as well.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy

124. All that went on at the Academy while we were there was never talked about, not at that age, it was total silence. I don't think anybody who was touched, fiddled with, abused or worse, raped, ever came forward at the time. I didn't tell anyone, not my parents and not my brother. You just took it, you accepted it, it was the norm. I suppose you also accepted it for fear that something worse might happen. If you grassed anybody up it would probably be disbelieved.
125. I remember my parents asking me why my attitude at school had changed and my results were dropping off. I obviously knew but I could never face telling them.
126. Before the Public Inquiry these things were talked about, in peer groups, or when we went back for school reunions, but never at the time. I've been to two reunions now, but some people can't face going back through the school gates.

127. As an adult, I have met and spoken with another teacher, Tony Cook, about the abuse at Edinburgh Academy. I broke down in front of him when talking about it and he then broke down in front of me. I didn't and wouldn't put him on the spot and ask him if he was aware. I think that would be a very hard and unfair thing. This particular teacher was a nice guy, was at Edinburgh Academy for many years and everybody remembers him as one of the good chaps.

Life after boarding school

128. I left Edinburgh Academy in May 1988 after my second sitting of Highers. When I immediately left my father got me a clerical position in an insurance company for the summer holidays. I had previously worked two summers as an office junior in my dad's own firm. I think that was a taster, as there was an expectation or hope that I would go into the law profession and follow my father's footsteps.
129. My school leaving exams weren't adequate to get into law, or a decent university, so I went to a polytechnic in London. I did that for a year but didn't like it and didn't do well so I left. I then started working in insurance and financial services in the summer of 1988.
130. I've now had a series of jobs in insurance and financial services and I haven't stayed with any company long term and progressed through their ranks. When I compare myself to my peer group in terms of where they've got to and their earnings trajectory, I'm nowhere close and never have been.

Impact

131. What Hamish Dawson did to me from the age of eleven is with me all the time. I have spoken to my doctor and psychologist about it. It causes me acute anxiety, it's affected my relationships, I've lost jobs, I struggle to sleep and I just wish that man had never been in my life.

132. In the year before I had Dawson, for the subject of history, I was third in my class. The next year, in Geits, I had him as my history teacher and I was 20th out of 20. The year after that I went back to being third. That was never picked up on and no one ever said anything about that. I have that on my report cards, it's quite staggering really and as a result history was the only major subject I never sat an 'O' Grade in. I just lost it when it came to history, there was an association and I just couldn't do it, I needed to block it out.
133. After the summer of 1983, when I was on the canal boat trip, I returned to the Academy and there was a massive dip in my performance going into that next school year. It was a really marked dip because I didn't want to be there.
134. My whole character changed because of Dawson. During that school time I started to get into all sorts of bother, even outside of school. Thankfully, that did calm down before I left school and I returned to being a normal nicer person. However, there was that stage during and after my experiences with Dawson that my parents were always getting phone calls as I was getting into scuffles or whatever.
135. The school definitely had an awareness, as I often had to go and account for myself to the headmaster to make an apology or whatever it was.
136. I didn't come forward with all this for a long time because even when I heard about the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, I thought all this was too trivial. I thought it would mainly be about people who had been raped or things like that. I didn't think what I'd gone through was enough. I just feel so ashamed. I wish I had said something so that other people didn't go through it as well. I just boxed it all up and put it away, that's all I wanted to do.
137. In 2022 I was working for Lloyds Insurance Company in London when my boss came into work one day and told me she'd just heard about my former school and all the child abuse stuff that was kicking off, from her ex-husband. There was no way, with

her and her ex-husband knowing, that I could carry on with that job, I was too ashamed. I resigned from that job that afternoon, I just made up an excuse and left.

138. It has odd impacts in weird ways, on lots of other aspects of life. There have been a few lumps and bumps in my employment history but whether or not they're directly attributable, I can't say.
139. I first spoke to the police about the abuse I suffered at Edinburgh Academy in 2023. It was after that meeting that I decided to speak to my then employer HSB in Manchester and make them aware of my situation as I felt my work wasn't as good as it could be. I spoke with the head of HR and an HR advisor and let them know what I was going through. I told them I had spoken to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and was about to provide a statement to the police. I also told them I'd been to see my doctor and was seeing a mental health nurse. I was under contract with them and they terminated my contract the following day. That's the kind of impact this has had on me.
140. I have had a few redundancies and I don't think I've been as successful in my working life as would have been expected. Going to Edinburgh Academy, like many schools, is supposed to give you an opportunity or a platform to try and excel. I'm not trying to be classist, I feel very lucky to have been given that opportunity at school, particularly coming from an adopted background and to be put into a family that gave me that step. It just didn't quite turn out the way that people would have hoped.
141. I've not earned badly at times in my working career but I've spent a lot of time out of work. I've spent a disproportionate amount of my life living on my own. I've only had a few significant relationships and my current relationship is somewhat strained. There is almost no sex life, which is rubbish, particularly for my partner who is very good. It just isn't where you should be at my age.
142. I'd wondered if it was something physical as well, but my doctor told me it was psychological. He told me everything in my body was working but my mind wasn't, my mind had just switched off to anything sexual.

143. I have been diagnosed with a few things that the doctor has looked into. I get recurring shingles, one of the primary triggers for that being stress. My historic recurrence of that is once or twice a year but last year I had seven episodes.
144. I was also diagnosed with another stress related illness about a year and a half ago, quite a rare illness called mesenteric panniculitis. It's an irregularity within your abdomen and can be a precursor to certain cancers although I'm glad to say I had follow up diagnosis and it's now cleared.
145. There are a lot of commonalities amongst my peer group. You live a lot of your life alone, a lot of people are a bit withdrawn and are often more comfortable on their own and less comfortable in public, or public speaking for example. Head partners in a law firm, for example, will not be the abused ones. They're quite happy standing up and doing whatever they're doing. Then there are some people who just struggle doing anything in life.
146. I have found myself drinking a lot more, and hiding it as well, which is probably one of the worst things. My partner goes to bed about 8:30 pm and I go to bed between 12:00 am and 1:00 am. Sometimes I wake up having fallen asleep drunk on the sofa. The doctor would say I was at a functioning alcoholic status. My body's ability to process alcohol is massive. I can drink a bottle of red wine, a couple of cans of beer and half a bottle of whisky then get up at 6:30 am and not know I've done it. That's just not right.
147. My partner would only see me drinking the bottle of red wine and I'm even at the stage of hiding the evidence. My partner does know about the abuse at Edinburgh Academy but she finds it hard to understand what the impacts are. I don't think she totally gets it. She was a special needs teacher and she will listen to me when I speak and I cry but with respect to her, and she is loving, she doesn't get it. The people who get it, even more so than the counsellors and the psychologists are the other people who've gone through it.

148. Since reporting things in 2023 everything has been extremely difficult. I've had problems sleeping, I've had alcohol problems and it's affected me sexually. I knew then that I needed help to make all that good again.

Treatment/support

149. I didn't really feel that I needed any psychological help before everything was properly re-opened. It was then like a tsunami of emotion. I have now spoken to my GP, a mental health nurse and two psychologists about my experiences at the Academy but it was many months after I started that process that I spoke to my partner and family.
150. I've had a lot of discussions about how I've managed to compartmentalise the bad and good experiences at the school. I only had a few bad years, the rest of it was pretty good.
151. I'm a person in life who tries to cling to all good things and push the others as far away as possible. Thirty-five years on I've managed to push the bad things pretty deep into the back of my mind. The reopening of everything has been part of what I've struggled with because it's all just come back.
152. One of the questions I was asked in a written questionnaire I completed for a psychologist was if I'd ever made plans to end my life. My answer to that is that I've never looked to end my life, but I have questioned the worth of me still being here. I'm certainly not in any immediate danger as I have too many good things going on.

Reporting of Abuse

153. I first started talking about the abuse and things not being right at a school reunion in May 2010. We talked about it being way off and questioned why no one had done anything about it. I continued to speak to my peer group after that reunion and still do today.

154. Another really significant thing for me was in May 2022 when I was contacted by Richard McLaughlin, who had been on the board of governors at Edinburgh Academy, or something like that. He was writing a book about Edinburgh Academy, knew I had been there and had an interest and wanted to speak to me. He mentioned Dawson to me and that was the first time that name absolutely destroyed me. I told him about my school experiences and I absolutely broke down talking to him.
155. In early 2023 I told my partner, my siblings and some of my Edinburgh Academy friends. That's when I first started opening up to my partner, my family and my peer group. Virtually every conversation I've had since then has been uncontrollable and I've broken down every time.
156. One real catalyst was watching the Panorama programme on the 1st December 2023. I cried and cried watching that programme and realised I had to speak about what happened to me. Two days later I wrote a formal letter to Edinburgh Academy and on 14th December I contacted the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. I also made a report to the police on the 27th December 2023. All of that really set everything in motion for me.
157. I have struggled to report and talk about the abuse I suffered because I still feel so much for Edinburgh Academy and I am involved with it on so many levels. In a strange way it feels like I am betraying the Academy but seeing the Panorama programme really helped me, particularly seeing Barry Welsh, the current headmaster, speak on the programme.
158. I did receive an acknowledgment from Barry Welsh which I felt was appropriate. He can't take ownership of it because it wasn't him who caused it but I think he's doing a lot of good. I get the feeling that it's not lip service and he is doing what needs to be done.
159. When I reported it to the police, I went to my local police station in Lockerbie and I was told to come back. I don't think they really knew what to do. When I did go back, I was

spoken to by two female police officers. One left after about five minutes and never came back, I'm not sure why, perhaps they made a judgement and had to free up a resource. Neither of the two officers had even heard of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry so to start with, I had to set the scene for them.

160. That lack of knowledge did concern me, they weren't specialists and didn't really know what questions to ask. I did check a draft statement they compiled which was accurate enough, although I feel they were a little confused in places. I was then told I wouldn't get a copy of the statement but would get a copy of any report if it went to court. I haven't heard a thing since then.
161. I have also approached Thompsons Solicitors and that's all ongoing at the moment.

Records

162. I wrote to Edinburgh Academy and asked for all the records they had that related to me. They sent me what I believe is a full account of what they had on me. I think I've got what I want from them.

Lessons to be Learned

163. The first thing I would say, which is something I do within my own job, is backgrounding. Most backgrounding is not worth the paper it's written on. I have discounted three backgrounding firms in my time for being negligent, and not doing the proper stuff.
164. For example, if a person comes along and with a reference, how many of those are actually validated? Gaps in employment need to be explained. I was living and working in Greece for months and when I came back and went into the backgrounding process, I actually called out the background company of my prospective employer because they were not doing what they should do. I told them they should be asking me to

voluntarily submit my passport to them, as it has a chip in it, and with a letter of authority from me they could then go to the Border Police and have the chip decoded to show everywhere I'd been. No one does that, you have to actually fill the gaps.

165. Employers need to verify referees, employment and professional exams. They need to get the most detailed level of DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks done before they do anything. Some people don't realise there are multiple levels of DBS checks.
166. If you have any qualms whatsoever go and do something broader and go outside the British police to Interpol. The British police should have, but don't always have, comprehensive details on people's misdemeanours, particularly those that are carried out abroad. You can't do global but the majority of British people will spend some holiday time in Europe so Interpol is an invaluable source.
167. I would also get a person to sign whatever level of disclaimer you can, at the earliest part of their employment process. If they have any reticence about doing that, then that is a red flag. As an employer you have to start telling people that you will fully background them. No stone should be left unturned.
168. You also have to remind school governors and heads of their accountability. There is a legal edict which applies in both English and Scottish legal systems, which is that ignorance is no defence in law. If you don't know something then find it out, especially if there are repercussions on children or society or vulnerable people.
169. On the flip side of that, you need to put into place the right culture for reporting. Whistleblowing is essential, but there needs to be protections and controls put in place as that can go the wrong way, particularly with children. However, within the teacher's environment they must be told that they must whistleblow and there must be a head of whistleblowing and owner of the whistleblowing policy for each school or educational authority appointed. They will have the ultimate responsibility and they must know how to deal with it in an anonymised way. They can also then determine whether or not protection needs to be put in place for a child or in an extreme scenario,

put protection in place for a wrongly accused teacher. All of that needs to be considered.

170. In the pupil's sphere, as well, there needs to be assurances that whistleblowing is the right thing to do and that they will be anonymised, protected and listened to.
171. I think there's an educational piece here as well. It may be beyond the realms of what the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry can do but if they can make feeds into the educational curriculum, I feel there should be something that draws the line on what is appropriate behaviour and what is inappropriate behaviour. I'm hoping that is taught and that children know they can call it out to someone who knows the right route to raise the alarm.

Hopes for the Inquiry

172. Tragically for me Hamish Dawson has passed but the first thought for me was to corroborate. The reason I think it's important to corroborate stories is that if there were lots of stories against Teacher 'A' and only one or two stories against Teacher 'B,' that then is a bit weak and a bit flimsy, it's not substantiated. However, as the momentum grows and more people come forward to say Teacher 'B' did that to me too, or they saw it being done to another person, then that builds the overall evidence situation, so decisions can be made. It will also help remove false allegations made against some teachers where one person might just have a grievance because of a mismanaged situation.
173. I would like to see better protection for children going forward now, for children that are currently at school. I've done recordings and interviews for someone who is doing that and there have been other people coming forward from other schools who would like to do something. I gather that is being turned into something meaningful so I think that's been a real benefit. It's helped me.

174. I am pursuing financial recompense but I knew that was available a year and a half before I did anything and I was never lured by that because I didn't want to go through this process. People will say there's been an impact on earnings but I actually think a more quantifiable way of looking at it is to look at what my parents paid to send me to Edinburgh Academy and should what has happened have happened? At the very least some or all of that money should be returned. I don't know how a solicitor would quantify it but I would see that as an outcome.

Other information

175. 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.....PCM.....

Dated.....18 October 2024.....