

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PFH

Support person present: No

1. My name is PFH. My maiden surname is PFH. My date of birth is 1977. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I am providing this statement in relation to my brother, KSB. My brother was born on 1975 in Berkshire. He tragically died in 2023 from complications due to alcoholism and has not been able to give his own account of the abuse he suffered when he was a pupil at Edinburgh Academy from 198 to 199.
3. I was born in Taplow, Berkshire into a family with five children. My parents' names are and KRG. My eldest brother is RMT, who is six-and-three-quarters-years older than me, my oldest sister is PKW, who is five years older than me, then my other brother was KSB, who was two-and-a-half-years older than me, and my twin sister is, who we refer to as. When there are five young children born very close together there's a lot going on in the family, all the time. I think that puts a vulnerability in place sometimes that could be taken advantage of.
4. All of us went to Windbury school. That was a small private school about a mile away in Bray. We were day pupils. My mum as well. KSB was at Windbury school, and then he went on to Long Close school in Slough and his completed primary education there. That was where my oldest brother, RMT, went as well. Myself and

■■■■■ stayed there until we were about seven and then we moved to a private school in Reading called The Abbey. We stayed there, as day pupils, until we were ten. Then we moved to Scotland and ■■■■■ and I went to St George's school in Edinburgh as day pupils. As a family, we lived in Scotland for about four-and-a-half-years and then ■■■■■ and I moved back to The Abbey in Reading. We stayed there until we finished school, when we were eighteen.

5. Both of my parents are very academic and they put high importance on academia. They always wanted to send their children to the most academic school that they could.
6. KSB ■■■■■ was a charming, easy, relaxed boy. In our neighbourhood in Berkshire all the children would flock to our garden looking for KSB ■■■■■ to ask what they were going to play, and KSB ■■■■■ would organise everyone. He was the most delightful ringleader. He wasn't bossy and wanted everybody to have fun. Years later, he'd be the one to organise the Christmas games for us and the neighbourhood. He was always a lot of fun.

The move to Scotland

7. When I was ten I moved to Scotland with my siblings and parents, and we hadn't started any exams. I continued to live at home with my family and have never boarded at school. When we moved, the only family member who stayed behind was my eldest brother, RMT ■■■■■, who was studying at St Paul's in London. He had already started his A' levels and he stayed to complete his exams. We moved to Edinburgh in September 198■■■■■ and we went into middle school. I can't remember why, but my older sister PKW ■■■■■ went up to Scotland to start school, two terms before us. I think it happened as soon as our parents made the decision to move to Scotland, because PKW ■■■■■ had started her GCSEs so they had to get her up to Scotland and she didn't move just before her GCSEs. Then the rest of us moved up when dad's job officially started in Scotland.

8. Essentially, we went to schools where we could sit A' Level exams. My parents knew, but we didn't, that there was a high probability we would eventually go back to England to live. They always wanted us to be able to slip back into the English system. The basis of the decision for KSB to go to the Edinburgh Academy was that they did A' Levels.
9. When my mum was first given a head's up from KSB's friend's mum that KSB was struggling with bullying at school, she regrets not having paid more attention to it. His friend from the Academy, [REDACTED], was then moved to a different school that only did Highers, so my mum and dad didn't have an option but to continue to send KSB to Edinburgh Academy. My mum decided that she would speak to teachers at the Academy, and thought that it had been resolved, and it clearly hadn't.
10. I started at St George's school in Edinburgh with my twin sister, [REDACTED]. PKW didn't go there as she failed the exam, so she went to Fettes instead. We got a choice of schools. We sat the exams for St George's and Mary Erskine's and we took those exams down in England. Mum showed us the pictures of the front covers of the two places. I think we looked at the pictures and decided Mary Erskine's looked ugly and we'd go to St George's, and that was that decision made.
11. Because the Scottish system takes their academic years from February to February, and the English system from September to September, when [REDACTED] and I went to St George's we went up a school year. That was quite tricky, as well as moving to a different school in a different country, we'd gone from being academically very able to getting Ds and Fs. That was a bit of a shock.
12. I remember talking to KSB about this. I said to him that must have made him one of the eldest in his year, because he was born on [REDACTED], and that must have worked to his advantage. He said he thought that too, but he was really short, and very blonde and very beautiful, to the extent that I remember in his English school, they were doing some play and it was an all-boys' school and they needed some bridesmaids. He was one of the bridesmaids. He had quite long hair and was very pretty. In his new Scottish school he was very short, late to mature and late for his

voice to drop. He said that they called him KSB which stood for KSB KSB. He said he thought he would go to the Academy and be top dog and he was full of confidence before he went up there.

13. I never attended Edinburgh Academy myself as a pupil. I'd been there at school drop-off and I'd been there to concerts and bits and pieces, but not a lot. We were at St George's when KSB was at the Academy as a pupil. The Academy was traditionally our official boys' school, but when we were at St George's they started spreading their wings and doing things with other schools. We had a bit more of a mix than we would if we'd been there a few years earlier. We lived in Murrayfield and we were first drop-off on the school run, most of the time, as St George's is in Murrayfield, then my mum would go on to Fettes and the Academy was the last drop-off. I don't know how it happened, maybe I was ill, but I remember once driving up past Fettes and going up to the Academy, dropping off and coming back. I remember thinking how stunning it was, and having very romantic views of what Fettes was like and my sister PKW told me it wasn't like that. She told me some horror stories.

First days at school in Edinburgh and early memories of school

14. KSB was initially living with us in the family home, and boarded latterly at the Academy for his last one and three-quarter years at school. I have no memory of KSB's first day at the Academy and if he would have had any anxiety about starting there. I have no memory of what he thought of the school at that stage. It would have been our first day as well and I have very little memory of my first day. Again, it's the five children thing.
15. We moved up from England. [REDACTED] and I had shared a bedroom, all our lives. We had been in a class together all our lives and we got to Scotland, where they had promised they would put us in the same class, and they put us in separate classes. That would have taken up all of my mum's time because my sister can shout quite loudly, and she certainly was horrified. At the end of about ten days, they turned round at my school and said [REDACTED] can come into my class if I wanted, and by this time I'd settled and made my own friends and said no, thank you. I can imagine that would

have taken up a lot of my mum's time and if KSB had been silent, which was how his 'go-to' was back then, then she may not have had time to consider KSB's situation. I can remember us all going to buy our school uniforms together and that type of thing, and I remember loads of shared times over the years, but I don't specifically remember that time.

Anti-English attitudes at school

16. None of us enjoyed the casual and incessant racism towards the English. It was a constant, every day, for us. I experienced it at St George's as well. It never got to above a certain level, but when you look back on it, I think the difficulty was the age that we moved at. If I look at the English curriculum that I did when we came back from Scotland, I would have liked to have said to the teachers, 'By the way, doing WWI and then WWII war poetry all in your GCSE years is a bit much, a bit samey and boring'. In the same respect, when we got to Scotland our history was about Jacobites, which every child who was brought up in Scotland already seemed to know. They knew every march and every Culloden battle by heart. I wondered why we needed to learn this as all of the Scottish pupils already knew everything.
17. Then we learned a bit of politics. Politics was about Scottish politics and English Literature was all about poetry between Scotland and England, and Scottish hating the English. Geography was about crofting and farming. It went on in every single lesson and then everything was a debate. There were two English people sat in class thinking 'Oh my god, kill me now' as we went through it again and then it overflows from that. They were convinced that English people hated Scotland and I just wanted to say, with all due respect, I was ten-years-old. Before I went to live in Scotland, I don't think I'd ever said the word Scotland. As to the language in the classroom, I remember once, we had an English history teacher who spoke really passionately about anti-English sentiment in the classroom, and I imagine he just did it to fit in.
18. It was never, 'oi you, PFH, you're awful', it was just, 'the English are awful. Kill the English' and it was said right in front of me. It was never against me, PFH, as a person, and I don't feel damaged by it. I felt a respite from it when we moved back

down to England and I wouldn't have to deal with it anymore, but it didn't affect how I saw myself and I think partly that was because there were two of us. As twins we had a lot of inter-connection, it's a powerful bond, and I was slightly protected. There were weaknesses in KSB, and if I had to think of somebody who would be potentially open to abuse it would be him, just because my son is the same. My son is too kind, he's too malleable, he's too empathetic and too thoughtful of other people, whereas my daughter would stand up for herself and nobody would be able to bully her. My son is like watching KSB grow up again.

19. I remember having a discussion with PKW about the anti-English comments, and she said she was getting it, not just anti-English, but an anti-public school attitude, because her school was Fettes. She'd be walking down the road and the local kids, I can't remember which comprehensive school it would be, would be catching the bus and they would hear her English accent, there would be anti-English comments. If she was carrying her cooking home they would just upload it all over her and her clothes. KSB didn't really voice it so much, he just went quiet and moody.

KSB's refusal to attend school

20. When we moved up to Edinburgh, I was aged ten and KSB would have been about twelve. I do remember that KSB would refuse to go to school. I remember my mum bribing him to go to school, not big amounts, but paying him. I was thinking that we're not getting paid to do our GCSEs, but he got paid to do his GCSEs and paid to attend school. Sometimes he would lie in bed and be ill, and I was thinking we had to be really ill to get that. We got sent to school when we had measles, whereas KSB seemed able to say, 'No, I don't want to go' and that would be it, he didn't have to go. Likewise, KSB would get migraines a lot and she had to get brought home from school. They used to ask me at school if I wanted to go home with her, and I didn't because I wasn't ill, so why would I want to go home?
21. I can't remember any explanation KSB gave us at the time for not going to school. I never knew. It wasn't like he had a cough or a cold and that was what I found so bizarre. He didn't confide in me at the time or make any disclosures to me.

22. KSB would refuse to go to school after he been at the Academy for a couple of years. As far as I can remember it wasn't consecutive days, so it may have been the same day of the week, but I wouldn't say it was every week because I might have noticed that. I wouldn't have known which days of the week he had particular subjects, and particular teachers that he might have wanted to avoid. I don't have any memory of KSB making any particular comments about a particular teacher or topic that seemed unusual to me at the time. He was very closed at the time to those types of conversations. My mum's approach was to bribe KSB to go to school and that worked and he went back to school, but I can't say if he missed the day and then went in the next day.

Conversations with KSB when at Edinburgh Academy as a day pupil

23. When I think of some of the conversations we would have, it would be over the breakfast table and KSB would be doing a paper round at that time. He would come in and wolf down some Weetabix and leave the house. This meant he was less emotionally available to talk to.
24. The time when I did connect more with him was when we had a guy staying with us who was from the family of my mum's best friend in England. He didn't get a place in the residences at university and came to live with us for a couple of terms, and we all hung out together. I remember KSB being a bit more chatty and coming out of his shell then. He didn't talk about school, but he was just more himself. That would have been just before we left Edinburgh, and just before KSB started to board for A' Levels, when he would have been aged about sixteen.

KSB's issues with food and mealtimes

25. KSB missed a lot of school when he was a day pupil, and he also didn't eat a lot of the time. He couldn't sit to eat with us, which was maybe why he liked the paper round and then he didn't have to sit down and eat. This went on all of his life. He would not eat in company, and before he died, he told me that the reason was they put loads of

salt in his food, or they put faeces in his food or urine in his food. I thought, 'How did I not know that?'

26. When we were living in Edinburgh, I remember KSB not eating dinner and him being incredibly nervous at the dinner table. He would constantly drop his cutlery. He was like somebody wired. He couldn't handle being shouted at, it was like he'd been electrocuted and he was very sensitive to loud noises. He was a teenager so he also did a lot of shutting himself in his room and playing music, and things that were normal for a teenager.

PKW's time at Edinburgh Academy at the same time as KSB

27. My oldest sister, PKW, attended the Academy for her sixth form to do A' Levels, and it meant she was at the school at the same time as KSB, although he was two years below her. He would have been doing his GCSEs and it was before he boarded. It meant she went off to university just before he started to board at Edinburgh Academy. It meant she wasn't there for him to confide in. My parents also had to deal with myself and settling and going back into the same class as each other and us moving down a school year.
28. At this time, my dad lost his job and he ended up getting a job in Wales. He then drove to Wales every day, initially from Berkshire. Then he ended up boarding every week in Wales and being at home at weekends. KSB was difficult to the extent where mum sent him away to go and work with my dad in Wales. I don't know why. She wouldn't normally have done that.

KSB's physical injuries at Edinburgh Academy

29. KSB told me later, in adulthood, that a PE teacher hit him hard from behind. If something like that had happened, that could have triggered him to not want to go the next day and he would have been bribed to go. I just don't know. He did tell me the name of the PE teacher, but I can't recall it now. At that stage PKW wrote it all down because she knew the teachers, but when I was listening to KSB I was trying to deal

with his alcoholism. Also, I was trying to work out how to make him better and how to keep him from drinking, and he was having heart attacks. There was so much going on that I wasn't paying the same attention and I thought that information about school could be dealt with at another time.

30. With regard to KSB telling me about the PE teacher who hit him on the back of the head, there didn't need to be a particular circumstance to set him off. If KSB was by himself, it would come from nowhere and about nothing. It happened more than once. I know that when KSB spoke to Giles Moffat who runs the Edinburgh Academy survivor's group and KSB told him the teacher had it in for him, Giles told him the teacher didn't just have it in for KSB, and that he'd also attacked Giles. I know the teacher is somebody who is known to others and was attacking other people.
31. KSB had suffered physical injuries at school. He said he'd had his nose broken twice, but I don't know who did that, and I wasn't aware at the time of him receiving any medical treatment. He said he'd had a black eye, he'd been hit on the head, he'd been hit round the body and he'd been stabbed in the thigh by another boy, called [REDACTED], in the middle of the night. I know who [REDACTED] is because I've seen a picture of him.
32. As an adult, KSB spoke to [REDACTED] on the phone. [REDACTED] was part of the Academy survivor's group and [REDACTED] told KSB the background to what had happened. [REDACTED] told KSB that his [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and I believe [REDACTED] was abusing [REDACTED]. I understand [REDACTED] said to [REDACTED] 'I'll only stop abusing you if you injure somebody'. I don't know if he was told it should be KSB, or if [REDACTED] chose it to be KSB. KSB said 'look you're not my favourite person in the world, but I don't blame you because you were being abused just as much as I was'. KSB also said to him 'if I had been given that choice, I would have done the same'. That makes me feel that KSB was being abused by [REDACTED], because given the choice to get out of being abused by him, KSB would have done the same. I've only just realised that he said it like that.

33. When I said to KSB that sounded awful, KSB commented, 'That wasn't the half of it.' When KSB spoke about Edinburgh Academy it was like opening a valve and then shutting it, he went from speaking a lot, to nothing very quickly, and going quiet in the conversation. Those were all disclosures he made in adulthood, and not at the time in Edinburgh. KSB didn't expand on how he'd come about so many physical injuries, but I think he wrote about it in a letter to my granny. I didn't realise that letter existed until much later when my mum showed it to us.
34. I wasn't aware of KSB getting medical treatment for injuries at the time they happened. I asked him if he went to the school nurse and why weren't injuries sustained at school flagged? Why did the school not know these things had happened? He said he wouldn't go to the school nurse because she was part of it. She knew exactly what was going on and she was one of the worst of them. He didn't tell me the name of the school nurse. He told me that she slammed people's fingers in doors.
35. I wasn't aware of KSB getting medical treatment at home for injuries. KSB was always the clumsy one, and now I ask myself, was he really? He was frustratingly clumsy, but when you think about it, a lot of these injuries weren't done in front of us. These things happened when he was boarding at the Academy. What he said was that it was worse at the beginning of term when the injuries could be visible, but at the end, when they knew you were about to go home, the assaults stopped. These injuries were both as a result of peer bullying and physical abuse by teachers. I don't know about the broken noses, but generally he was saying with the clacken being used in class, it would be for the most minor infraction. Like saying the wrong tense of a verb in Latin. Then you had to pick out of the box of weapons of canes and clackens and other random implements and they would get another boy in class to hit you with the implement. This meant that KSB was hit by other boys, on the instruction of the teachers. He didn't mention any specific names or particular instances of this.
36. I remember KSB knocked his tooth out on a family holiday and he had to have a crown fitted. After that it kept on coming out. He had to keep going to the dentist to get

it mended. That is definitely something that I recall. How that happened, I don't know. I don't know what caused the crown to repeatedly fall out. He didn't come home to England to have the tooth repaired. His then-girlfriend's dad was a dentist in Edinburgh and he used to put it back. I know that it fell out at least twice. He never gave an explanation for it. I think that's why mum got frustrated because he didn't give an explanation.

37. I think the school nurse did know exactly what was happening and he said the school were constantly making up excuses, saying 'this happened in rugby' and 'this happened in hockey', and pupils would get different bones broken. KSB didn't go to the nurse when he was stabbed in the leg as he was too scared to. That was his explanation of why he didn't go to the nurse. My view was, how could you have a stab wound to a leg that heals well? I think the wound was made deliberately high up so it wouldn't show. He never said where it was or how deep it was.

Physical abuse of KSB at Edinburgh Academy

38. The abuse definitely ramped up when he was boarding at the Academy and that would coincide with when he changed his attitude a lot, and when he started drinking. I'm not sure what caused the broken noses, if it was being hit by teacher or peer abuse. He said to me that 80% of abuse was peer-on-peer, but it was very much orchestrated by the masters.
39. KSB did say to me that he tried to take his own life by sitting [REDACTED] and that he was up there for hours. This was in the period when he was boarding. I don't know the name of the boarding house he was in. He also said in the boarding house that he was next door to another boy who was from overseas who was in the year below. This boy had a tarantula, which must have been known to the masters, and the other boys didn't pick on him because of that. This boy used to help to protect KSB. KSB said he owed that boy his life, and that wasn't because the young boy stopped him from taking his own life, it was because he stopped the bullies, whether adults or children, I don't know. I don't know that boy's name.

40. KSB was always losing his stuff at school. He was getting his belongings urinated on, faeces put all over them and they were getting stolen. He was getting 'bog-washed', which meant that his head was shoved down a toilet and it was flushed. I believe that the toilet would have been dirty. He didn't mention any specific names of abusers. He had his head held and his hair shaved and dyed. It takes a long time to dye hair, to bleach it blonde and then dye it green and this would have been done against KSB's will. I remember he came home after the end of term with the colour at the front. At the time he told us he'd put Sun-In product on his hair and then gone in the pool and his hair had gone green.
41. When KSB's hair was dyed, it looked severe, it was not attractive at all. As people have said, KSB had good style and he knew how to dress and how to style his looks. You would look at him and wonder what phase he was going through. He also wore a cap on his head which he didn't take off at the dinner table. KSB kept up a façade for years and he would only drop a comment every now and again to suggest that school hadn't been good, but it was always in amongst a lot of other stuff. In the time before he died, KSB told me about his hair being dyed by other pupils. He didn't mention any names.

Issues around reporting abuse while at school

42. Some of the other pupils who are involved in the Academy survivor's group, have done some really terrible things and they have to live with that. KSB didn't want to punish them. He didn't want people to feel as bad as he did, it wasn't his nature. He didn't go out there to seek revenge on the people who did really bad things to him, I don't think he had the inner strength to deal with that. He knew it would damage his heart further. He didn't mention anyone he was able to confide in whilst he was at the school. He talked twice about really close friends. One was a boy who was from England, [REDACTED], who he knew before he went to Scotland and when KSB moved to Scotland, [REDACTED] moved to Torquay, and I think he was someone that KSB would have been able to speak to. The other person, KSB said was his best friend and who was made to beat him up. I don't know who he was and I don't know if he was made to do that by a

teacher or by older kids, but I think that really damaged [KSB]. I think he lost trust in best friends.

43. As to parents' evenings at Edinburgh Academy, I think my mum and dad thought the masters there weren't the friendliest people. I think they put some of it down to them being English. I think my parents thought there was an anti-English sentiment from the teachers against them too. I remember my mum saying when they went to pick [KSB] up from boarding school from his last day of boarding, their flight got delayed so they were a bit late. They met the housemaster who'd been looking after him over all of that time, he opened the door, pushed [KSB] through it and then shut the door in their face. He didn't say anything. That was [KSB]'s very last day at the Academy. My parents were stunned.
44. At some point, I know that [KSB] was cutting himself and I found this out much later on. His wife found out about it. He and his first wife [] met at university and it was her who told us and he'd said that he'd done it whilst he was boarding in Edinburgh. He would have worn long sleeves at the time to hide it.

Academic performance at Edinburgh Academy

45. I think our school report cards were all not as good as we would have liked. I think that perhaps if [KSB]'s slipped it was possibly hidden by the fact that ours went down. We had a reason because we went up a school year, whereas he didn't.
46. [KSB] was a very clever boy and should have done a lot better at his A' Levels. He still did well, but he was very bright across the board. He chose to go to the same university as his elder brother, [RMT], and he did that for his own protection. I asked him why he didn't move school and go to London to St Paul's where [RMT] went. He said the masters at Edinburgh Academy told him it would be worse there, and that what he experienced was normal and it was his own problem and he was a bad person. I think there must have been work on him to isolate him from having these discussions with the family, because in all other respects we were close. We'd chat away with each other about all sorts of things in the school holidays at home, but we never talked

about what was happening to him at school at the time. Usually, over the years, it was tiny bits of information would be fed to us whilst he was drunk and we'd wonder what it meant and we couldn't follow it up later because it was like coming up against a brick wall. He wouldn't deny saying it, he would just pretend that he hadn't spoken. Then, it was years later when it all came out one evening.

Leisure time and friends

47. When we were all in Edinburgh, KSB had his close friend, [REDACTED] KSB was also friends with my friend's brother. He didn't have friends coming round to the house in Edinburgh in the same way as they had down in England. Edinburgh was more of a place where you went and did things with people, like we did loads of activities such as Scottish country dancing, ice skating, tennis, canoeing, horse riding and we were constantly out at clubs and meeting people there. I think that was partially my mum helping us to break into the Scottishness. Whereas in England it was more of a relaxed, old-fashioned life.
48. In the period when KSB was boarding, I would see him at home in the holidays and I noticed that his nose was bigger. I just thought that was because he'd gone through puberty. We'd gone from him being part of the crew and we'd always go out with his friends to him suddenly trying to divide us off. We made friends with a girl who was a bit older than us and I remember them writing letters to each other and they didn't say nice things about us. I remember seeing one of the letters. He was behaving differently and it's difficult to know what to attribute to that.
49. There were lots of arguments between my parents and KSB. He would sit down at the dinner table and he'd generally drop cutlery or accidentally cut a piece of food and it would go flying. He'd storm off and then we wouldn't see him. I remember, as clear as day, that he would sit down at the far end of the table, as far away from mum and dad as he could get, and not be under scrutiny. It was out of the natural age order of things for us that we'd previously always had. He'd go off to the garden at the far end and disappear and wouldn't come back until dinner was eaten. Then we'd be telling

him it was disrespectful to mum because she'd been cooking. He didn't give any explanation for his sudden change in behaviour. I wish he had said something.

School trips

50. I think KSB went on a canoeing trip with the school that was probably overnight. I think he did some Combined Cadet Forces activities. I remember PKW and KSB talking about if you were late back for school from sailing, because the winds had changed on the Firth of Forth, the master would purposely drive back early and leave you and you'd have to walk back to school in wet clothing. It was a long way from the Firth of Forth to the Academy. Then you'd get told off for being late when you got back to school.

Life at home

51. If I think back to that time, we operated as a unit of five kids and as the 'upper kids' and the 'lower kids' and then there was me and [REDACTED], and we did virtually everything together. KSB really struggled to make friendships with us and particularly [REDACTED] made it difficult. He and I always bonded a bit better, and he always resented that [REDACTED] would make it difficult. We'd sit and play board games together and play football and we'd play cricket together, but we didn't chat the deep stuff. My dad would take us to go and play cricket, we'd mess around in the garden together, we'd go sailing together, we'd go canoeing together, we'd go for long walks together. I guess when you're doing activities you don't have to be talking.

Reporting abuse after leaving school

52. KSB would not have wanted compensation from the Academy. It was only hearing other people say 'me too' that drew him out of his shell. He didn't make a formal report to the police. He was meeting up with Giles Moffat from the Academy survivor's group two days before he died, and he said he had all the information on a memory stick.

53. The impact on KSB of finding out he wasn't alone in his suffering was two things. I could hear the relief in his voice and he was crying having heard it wasn't just him. It wasn't his fault. On the other hand, he took himself off the group because he found it too all-encompassing and quite a few people in the group had been perpetrators, which I didn't appreciate at first. I thought he'd found the group discussion too difficult. Groups like that are great, but they're not for everybody. There needs to be someone who orchestrates it, who isn't involved and who has the talents and skills. It needs to be someone who has some kind of training in psychotherapy and addiction in order to hold these people whilst they process their accounts. Perhaps it needs to be more than one person if there's so many people in the group.

Impact on KSB

54. If I take the boy he was before he went to the Academy, and imagine where that boy turns into a man and what sort of life that person could have had, KSB would have had a different life. There was no way he would have married his first wife, or his second wife. He would have had a very different outlook and more respect for authority. He had a fantastic job, but a lot of it used his ability to be a very sociable person, which he was. I'm not sure how academic it required him to be and I think perhaps he would have gone slightly more into it. It's hard to say, because he'd always been such a sociable person.
55. KSB could have gone far in his work, he really could. After the abuse he didn't want to go far because he wanted to stay in the same place and be secure. He lost his job at [REDACTED] and it was soul crunching, because if he hadn't lost his job through alcohol he would have been working there until retirement. Probably because he'd found his little heaven and he wouldn't trust that anywhere else wouldn't be abusive.
56. His experiences in school damaged his relationship with his family. He wasn't able to open up and tell us the things that he would have liked to have done. He said mum and dad can't find out about this, it would break their hearts. They know now about what happened to KSB at school. I had to tell them piecemeal, and drop in information, bit-by-bit. They're coping with it. My parents had to move away from [REDACTED]

because they couldn't be around KSB anymore. They couldn't watch their son kill himself with alcohol, which is effectively what he did.

57. KSB chose a wife who was an alcoholic. His second son had profound learning difficulties due to an ante-partum haemorrhage in pregnancy caused by alcohol and smoking. That put so much stress on their relationship.
58. I believe that he had issues with establishing a healthy power balance in physical relationships with partners. He also slept with a lot of people. I think he was just very messed up.
59. When KSB was married to [REDACTED], he had disclosed to her that he slept with a knife under his pillow at the Academy and we never got any more details than that. [REDACTED] then told my mum what KSB had said. Both KSB and [REDACTED] were alcoholics at the time and raising three children, one with severe learning difficulties. It was very tricky to have conversations with him. He was not going to open up about these things. It took years for him to tell me he was an alcoholic. It came in stages. You could party alongside him, you could talk about music, you could talk about anything other than deep conversations. He would block that at all costs.
60. With regard to drinking for KSB. My parents did give us some alcohol when we were young, it was definitely available to us. At Sunday lunch we could have a small glass of wine, it wouldn't have been lots. We weren't banned from having it like some people were. I knew people who had more than that. When KSB went to Durham university, he said he missed some lectures and would go to the pub instead so he could drink. My parents are steady drinkers, my granny was an alcoholic, but functional. KSB's alcoholism meant that he would consume four bottles of whisky a day, by the end of his life. His normal was probably two bottles and he probably cut back sometimes but it was a phenomenal amount. I did ask him if he was trying to kill himself through drinking and there was silence. At times he wanted to stop and he would tell me, 'I'm ready, I'll stop' and I'd say I'd drive to see him at his home and I'd take him to re-hab where I live. By the time I drove to his house, one of his friends had turned up and they'd gone to the local pub.

61. We did have long conversations in the family about how we could possibly get him to re-hab in South Africa, but the ethics of it weren't practical. He liked going to South Africa to see my sister, and they did have a clinic there and we spoke to the people that run it about how they managed things. It seemed really good until we got to the practicalities of getting him there. My brother wasn't stupid and he would probably haul us over the coals and rightly so. It was a discussion that we had and could we see it actually happening, and if we didn't, he could be dead in six months. Which he was. It was an exploratory conversation and we needed it, so we knew that when he died that we'd done everything we could. This conversation happened before we knew the full depths of what KSB had gone through. We had explored every option and everything else would be breaking the law, and we couldn't do that.
62. I feel that KSB was probably sexually abused at the Academy. Through doing my job, I see people who have been sexually abused and I'm gutted that the pieces fell into place and came to my attention so late in his life. KSB was anti-establishment. He was anti-police, hence he would never come forward to the police. He was anti-power. He loved the underdog. He was so popular at work because he cared about the people below him, and in a way that most people don't have time for.
63. When he told me, as an adult, about his time at the Academy, he'd be at home by himself and it was a monologue and I couldn't then go back to ask more questions. I said to my sister, it was like going down a one-way street. You were just gathering as much information as you could, knowing you would never be able to go back and hear it again. I wish now that I'd recorded what he said. You could have a hundred conversations with KSB and you'd never know which ones he was going to open up in. I was also worried about my own children hearing these things.
64. After all of the things KSB told me, he said it was just the tip of the iceberg for him and that wasn't nearly the worst of it. When I asked what was the worst of it, he just wouldn't go there. What's worse than being stabbed in the leg, having your head flushed down the toilet, broken bones. My brain goes in one direction only.

65. It robbed his children of their dad, and not just after he died. He tried his best, but being an alcoholic doesn't make a good dad. He collapsed in front of his children with one of the children having severe learning difficulties in the house. It wasn't healthy and my parents couldn't move until their grandchildren had grown up enough that they could move.

Reflections after KSB died

66. I have an email from KSB's good friend, [REDACTED], who was also living in Edinburgh when we were, but he went to a different school. After KSB died, [REDACTED] emailed some of the boys that KSB would have known at Edinburgh Academy trying to find out if it could have had anything to do with the Academy. Some of them wrote back with their memories of KSB and how happy he was and how confident he was when he came to the school. He had a very distinctive, trendy haircut because everyone wanted to blend in and not be seen, and they were amazed that he didn't seem to need to follow that trend. Certainly, for a while, KSB didn't jump into line. He was quite a fun prankster.
67. The boys who emailed back to [REDACTED] were in KSB's year at Edinburgh Academy. A former pupil, known by the initials [REDACTED], wrote, *'sadly my memory is bloody terrible, when I meet up with old friends, people talk about stuff that I simply have no recollection of. I do my best with my vague impressions, but hopefully that will help you chat. I do remember that when he first arrived, my initial experience of being the only English boy in a Scottish school wasn't the best. When I realised he was English too I was definitely very excited. Still, even I was very taken aback by his very southern accent. Unfortunately, the usual school idiots did find his accent something they could pick on for being different. Still, he was definitely a breath of fresh air and I remember he was full of energy and gregarious back then. So very easy to get on with. I also remember he had plenty of bad jokes in class. He was definitely quite fashionable, in particular with his flair for the latest haircuts. Everyone else was so boring in comparison. Maybe because nobody wanted to stand out. Looking back, he was incredibly brave in that respect. Even when he was taking flack, he didn't change who he was and that deserves so much respect for that. He was also definitely a lady's*

man and when the girls arrived at the school in sixth form he was in his element. When we went on holiday to Ibiza when we were eighteen, he rapidly hooked up with a girl in her early twenties from the flat above. We were in awe of such an achievement, needless to say he was the only one of us who had any success that holiday. I think I previously sent some photos of that trip, including him and [REDACTED] standing next to a massive pane of glass they broke whilst having a wrestle. Although we soon realised we had far too little money for such a trip. None of the cool nightclubs for us. We had good times hanging out in cheap bars by night and sunning ourselves by the beach and jumping off cliffs by day. I can't remember much about his sporting prowess at school, but pretty sure he played hockey in the [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] and I. I might even have a picture of that somewhere. He was one of the good guys, but like many others he suffered unacceptable levels of abuse for no good reason. He was just different and that, typically, was enough. Probably in most (normal schools) he would have been very popular. He started at the school full of energy, he had bags of personality and was good fun. It's hard not to think that I should have done more for KSB (and others) in standing up to the abuse and bullying. It was such an endemic culture and I for one wasn't strong enough to stand against it. Of course, we don't know what else was going on in his or [REDACTED]'s lives, but to hear of two deaths in our year related to mental health is pretty shocking. There could only have been around ninety pupils in our year and statistically that seems unlikely.'

68. Someone known as [REDACTED] wrote 'that's pretty grim news. I don't think many thirteen, fourteen or fifteen year olds would have the confidence to stand up for themselves never mind other people. It's funny, I don't remember KSB having as tough a time as some people at the Academy but memory is a pretty selective thing. We all went off to Ibiza after the school. It was a memorable holiday with [REDACTED] being beaten up by the police, KSB breaking his ankle whilst trying to impress a gang of English football hooligans and me throwing KSB through a closed window. I don't suppose it's unusual that we lost touch with no emails or social media. I remember when he lived with his family in London they were next door neighbours to [REDACTED]. Imagine moving from there to the Academy, frying pan to fire etc. I must confess I find it hard to separate normal shitiness, from most schools with the sort of things the investigation is looking into. I don't think I experienced anything much worse than you'd get

anywhere. Kids are cruel and teachers can be right cunts. Although I remember seeing stuff that seemed beyond the pale, involving other people, including you [REDACTED] other than that it was really just convincing gossip around the likes of IBU [REDACTED] Doc Storey, Mr IDR [REDACTED] and the likes.'

69. These comments do highlight that when KSB [REDACTED] got to the Academy he was one person, and when he left there, he was another.

Lessons to be Learned

70. I am angry with the teachers who ignored what they had seen back then, what they had heard in rumours, what they heard through the door, what they heard on the grapevine, what they saw in passing and did nothing. The responsibility for safety at a school comes from teachers. The example should be set and I am just as angry with the people who, years ago at the Edinburgh Academy didn't put this at the forefront and didn't reach out to the alumni. I believe at least one other school did this. They are quick to reach out to their alumni when they need to ask for money, so they can do it for their own purposes.
71. Their duty of candour for the effects of what happens within their walls does not stop at the day that pupils graduate their A' Levels. They are responsible for developing healthy human beings, and if there has been anything untoward then they need to prioritise that above their reputation and above their profits, because if they don't it won't be just me that lost my brother, just my nephews who lost their dad or just my parents who lost their son. Why isn't there a school alumni officer to go and speak to the people, and put the networks out to find the former pupils and ask about what happened at the school and if anything like that happened to them?

Hopes for the Inquiry

72. I hope the Inquiry doesn't have to get twenty reports together before the Inquiry can take it back to the Academy, so that the Academy is getting the feedback as and when it arises. Time is really of the essence. There's a predictable amount of time from when somebody is abused to when they fall apart as a victim. KSB was fairly standard, in which case, if we're looking for other people who are going through the same stage, we're probably looking for people who are equally as messed up. If you look at the survivor's group, KSB was an alcoholic, there were heroin addicts, cocaine addicts, people who were immensely messed up. If that school had to announce, not only, how many people they've sent to Oxford and Cambridge, but as well, how many ex-pupils who are now homeless and drug addicts, they would do something about it.

Other information

73. 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..... PFH

Dated..... 27.11.2025