

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KVC

Support person present: No

1. My name is KVC. My date of birth is 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before Edinburgh Academy

2. I was born abroad, and my family lived abroad, on and off, until I was about twelve years old. My father's name was and my mother's name was. I have three siblings. My elder brother is eight years older than me, my elder sister is six years older than me, and my younger brother is four years younger than me.
3. My dad worked abroad all the time, he came back later than us. My older brother and sister were at day school in Edinburgh, so we came back for periods of time. I had been to thirteen schools by the time I was thirteen years old, because of moving about. It was a bit disruptive.
4. My parents had a family home in Edinburgh, and a government house where my dad was based abroad. My family were from Cumbria and Lancashire originally, but I think that they were in Africa when my brother was born. Then, my dad went to where I was born, but my mother was half-Scottish, and they thought that the education in

Edinburgh was so good that that was where they would base themselves. They knew that our education abroad would be under pressure because of all the moves.

5. I don't remember the exact chronology, but I was at school abroad where my dad was based, until I was five or six years old. Then, for reasons that I don't understand, we seemed to do about a year there, and a year back in the United Kingdom.
6. My elder brother and sister initially came back as day pupils, and we came back with them. Then my mother, younger sibling, and I went back to where my dad was based, and my elder brother and sister boarded at Edinburgh Academy and St George's school. I think both schools were primarily day schools, but they had an element of boarding.
7. I think primarily my parents were worried about the quality of the education abroad, so they tried to get my older siblings back to school here, but neither day school nor boarding and living apart seemed to really work. My parents were constantly changing where my siblings were.
8. The first school I attended was abroad, but I can't remember anything about it other than a girl called [REDACTED] who I didn't like at all. I think that schooling for expatriates was a bit less sophisticated than it was in the United Kingdom. There was nothing bad about it, but it seemed to be of limited range.
9. After that, I was in a number of primary schools in Edinburgh. One of them was called Miss Mulvey's which was somewhere near Roseburn. I suppose my serious education began when I went to Edinburgh Academy junior school.
10. I can't remember how old I was when I went to Edinburgh Academy junior school. I was a day pupil. I wouldn't have gone there before I was nine years old so it must have been 196[REDACTED] or 196[REDACTED]. I was there for eighteen months to two years. I did progress from one school year to the next. Then I went back to live abroad, and when I came back, I went to Edinburgh Academy senior school.

Edinburgh Academy junior school, Arboretum Road, Edinburgh, 196█ to 196█

Location / Layout / Staffing

11. I would have started at Edinburgh Academy junior school in September. They didn't allow you to start other than at the beginning of the school year. In terms of preparation for me going to Edinburgh Academy it was a little bit easier for me because my brother had been to the same school, although not to the junior school. There was a sense that he had been down that road so it must be okay. Because my brother █ is eight years older than me, he was in the senior school by the time I started at the junior school.
12. SNR █ the junior school was called Miss ICP █. My first form teacher was Miss ICF █. I can't remember the names of any of the other teachers. We had male and female teachers. We had a male gym teacher.
13. The school had a tarmac playground at the front. I seem to remember a rectangular building with inset windows in concrete panels. I think the classrooms were to the right of the entrance. The gym was round the back somewhere, but I only have the vaguest memory of it.
14. I had no real understanding of school being bad then, so I wasn't particularly apprehensive. I was a fairly happy-go-lucky child, I wasn't particularly prone to anxiety, as far as my mother told me. I wasn't particularly bothered about going to Edinburgh Academy, there was no unhappiness about it before I went to the school.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy junior school

First day

15. Edinburgh Academy junior school is somewhere down near the Academy's games pitches on Henderson Row. It was a 1960's building. When I started at the junior school, I think things were a little bit harder because my dad wasn't around. I had a sense of being a little bit of an outsider because I had missed out on all the background culture of being a kid in the United Kingdom. I didn't understand about football. My education abroad had been quite basic, so it was a bit of a struggle in some of the lessons, which got worse.
16. My classmates and I didn't all start at the school together. The impression I got was that the other children had been there for three years. My sense was that I had arrived in a cohort that knew each other and knew the way the school worked.
17. There was a kind of buddy system in the junior school, and I had a buddy for the first week I was at the school. We went to the gym in that first week, and we were told to put our boxing gloves on. I was only nine or ten years old and had never had boxing gloves on before. Then my buddy started beating me up. The others in the class all knew how to box as they had started doing it the year before. I just thought, "What is going on here?"

Mornings and end of school day

18. I got to school in the morning by bus, or rather, by two buses. I got the bus from home, which was near Donaldson's school for the deaf. I got a bus into town to Princes Street, then walked up the hill opposite The Mound, then got a bus to the school. I was doing that right from the start. I think life was much safer then, there wasn't as much concept of risk for young children travelling alone. I remember my mum did a test run, then she was with me for the first day, and then I was on my own.

19. As far as I recall we had pegs outside the classroom where we left our coats and bags. I only remember one or two classrooms. We didn't move classes the way that kids do now.
20. There were assemblies but I don't remember if they were daily. Miss ICP took the assembly. I remember it being in the hall, with a stage at the front.
21. The end of the school day was a slightly more cheerful exercise because we all left together and got the bus home, whereas I would come to school on my own. We got the bus somewhere down on Henderson Row. I wasn't ever made to stay behind at school for detention.

Mealtimes/Food

22. We had our lunch in the same hall as assembly. There were long tables. I have a vague memory of their being a staff member at the end of the table. The food was awful but there was no bother at mealtimes, it was supervised.

Clothing/uniform

23. We got my school uniform at the outfitters just off George Street. That was called Aitken and Niven. There was also a shoe shop on Princes Street which had an X-ray machine, and you could look at the bones in your feet.
24. The uniform was blue shorts, blue blazer, grey shirt, a blue and white scarf, and a cap. The shorts weren't thin cotton or woolly, they were halfway between the two. You didn't go into long trousers until you were six feet tall. I don't really feel the cold, so that wasn't an issue for me. The school rule was that you wore school uniform to any public event during term time.

Trips and holidays

25. I didn't go on any trips or holidays at the junior school.

Schooling

26. Miss ICF was my first form teacher. We called her ICF behind her back. She was a very strong-willed teacher. The general belief was that her fiancé had died in the first world war, and if so, that obviously affected her. She was very tough on us. She always called us by our surname. That was another thing I wasn't used to, I was used to being called by my first name.
27. Miss ICF taught the majority of our classes. I get the sense that we went upstairs sometimes to a different classroom and a different teacher, but I can't remember much about it. I can only remember the bad things that happened at Edinburgh Academy.
28. I don't think I went to school on a Saturday at the junior school. I can't remember if we did at the senior school. I think I did okay at school, but it was things like growing beans on blotting paper. I just didn't seem to receive a lot of approval.
29. Looking back, I could have been one of those kids who wasn't really attracted to the teacher's particular teaching style. I wasn't able to navigate the norms of the school, so I probably stuck out. I don't know if I got in trouble more than other people. Educationally, the whole junior school was a non-event for me. I can't remember what was expected of me.

Sporting activities

30. There was a games afternoon, within the school day. Gym was also in the curriculum. The sports pitches were down near the park. I remember going down to the pitches, but I don't remember much about the matches. We played 'clachan' at lunchtime. Clachan was a game something like hockey. I didn't have a clue what to do.
31. I don't think we played rugby. We played football and did athletics. I don't remember the summer sports, but I think we played cricket. Sport wasn't that big a deal at the junior school.

Review of attendance

32. My dad was mainly away, and I don't know if my mother attended any parents' evenings.

External Inspections

33. I was not aware of any external inspections at Edinburgh Academy junior school.

Discipline

34. I never had lines at the junior school. I don't remember being sent out of the classroom, it was mainly the tawse. The tawse was a leather strap with a split at one end.
35. When you got the tawse, you had to hold your hand out, palm up, with the other hand underneath to make it more rigid. Miss ICF would hit us twice on a bad day, once on a good day. It was always done in front of the other kids. I wasn't hit with the tawse anywhere other than the hand.
36. I wasn't a very emotionally literate person at that age, all I knew was it was bad. I didn't try and work out what was going on. I was just baffled by the whole thing. It was an entirely new experience. I had never been beaten in school abroad.
37. There was one occasion in the second year I was at the junior school where I was doing something at the bus stop. My form teacher saw me, and she didn't like it. I can't remember her name. She was able to pick me out because I had a particularly white scarf. She gave me a 'ticking off' and told me to see her the following morning. I got beaten with the tawse on the hand for that, but I can't remember what I was doing at the bus stop.

38. When you were hit with the tawse, you would get a mark on the edge of your hand that looked like a burn, so it was a fairly hard strike and Miss ICF's aim was pretty good.

Prefects / senior pupils

39. We didn't have prefects in the junior school.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy junior school

40. In my early days at the junior school, I was told that I wasn't playing clachan properly and I got beaten by a member of staff for that. I was told that I was playing the fool. I don't know who beat me for that. There was always a member of staff on duty outside at lunchtime.
41. One thing that was really bizarre was that we had to parade in front of Miss ICF every morning with two sharp pencils and a rubber. She would touch the top of the pencils and if they weren't sharp enough, you got the tawse. You didn't get the tawse there and then, she got everyone to parade with the pencils and then sit down. Then you would be called forward to get the tawse if you were one with blunt pencils. I don't recall if there was a punishment book that Miss ICF completed for this.
42. I can remember one of my peers who regularly wet himself in the queue with his pencils. He would get the tawse for that as well. I can't remember that boy's name. It was a most agonising time for kids who were eight or nine years old.
43. Among the kids, there was an atmosphere of fear. Some were more robust characters and just laughed it off, and my classmate who wet himself was the other extreme. Most of us just dreaded school.
44. Miss ICF was the first person I was beaten by for not doing well in class. I was off school with mumps or something and I came back, and the class had been taught how

to use a ruler. It was basic, primary school stuff. I came back not knowing how to use the ruler for measuring. I obviously frustrated Miss ICF, and I got the tawse for that too.

45. We had to bring in to school a model of a house. A friend of mine, called [REDACTED], brought in a model he made out of Lego with a windmill on the side. We had to put all the models on the windowsill, and Miss ICF saw [REDACTED]'s model and said, "What's this? Where have you seen a picture of this house?" [REDACTED] replied that he had just made it up, and Miss ICF went absolutely ballistic. She either threw or knocked the model onto the floor and [REDACTED] got the tawse. It was irrational. I think Miss ICF was quite a disturbed lady.
46. I got the concept that if you behaved badly, you were in trouble. What I didn't understand was that if you did badly scholastically, you also got into trouble. It was a very authoritarian system. That was a bit of a shock, because I had only had the situation where if you didn't understand how to do something, then the teacher would use a different explanation. Being beaten for not getting things right was a bit of a shock to the system.
47. There was a more troublesome issue for me due to my naivety about all kinds of things. We weren't exposed to much of life at my school abroad. We didn't have television, so I didn't know about a lot of things. Because P.E. was in the curriculum we had to go to the gym and get changed into our gym kit there, then we would change back at the end. I think I was sexually abused by the gym teacher.
48. The gym teacher insisted that we didn't wear underpants. He didn't attempt to give any explanation as to why we didn't wear underpants. We did gym in a singlet, our shorts, and our gym shoes. The gym teacher was a tall guy with brown curly hair. He had quite a large nose and his head was slightly tipped back. I can't remember his name. He would walk round patrolling the changing room. If he saw bare buttocks, he would paddle them with either a table tennis bat or his bare hand in a rather lingering way.

49. The gym teacher touched our buttocks on multiple occasions. It was really uncomfortable, he did it to everyone. I was absolutely terrified, and nobody got changed quicker than me. He didn't say anything when he was touching us, which made it a bit sinister. We dreaded going to get changed. It wasn't that bad in the grand scheme of things, but as a child, it was terrifying.
50. We didn't shower after games at that age, but the gym teacher was around again. I don't have a clear memory of him doing anything when I was putting my clothes back on, my clear memory is of the gym teacher fondling us when we were getting changed into our gym kit.
51. The gym teacher who fondled us was the only gym teacher I can remember in the two years I was at the junior school, and he would have taken the gym class when I was under ten years of age.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy junior school

52. I was a nightmare at home on Sunday evenings, because I didn't want to go back to school on Monday. Eventually my mother got it out of me. I can't remember what words I used but I told her that I couldn't bear it and told her about Miss ICF hitting us with the tawse. My mother said she would speak to other parents.
53. My mother was in touch with a lot of parents who were concerned about our treatment at school. I would say there was widespread concern among parents about the way that Miss ICF treated people. In the end, my mother went to SNR who just said that I was a troublesome child and there was no issue, but that concerned my mother because I wasn't a troublesome child anywhere else.
54. I suppose I was quite a naïve child, I wasn't very well versed in the ways of the world, but I remember my mother talking to me about having talked to other parents, and that she was going to do something about Miss ICF but nothing ever changed. Miss ICF remained the same all the time.

55. I never told my parents, or anyone else, about the gym teacher.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy junior school

56. I left Edinburgh Academy junior school when my family went back abroad, to where my dad was still based. I don't think that anything that happened at the junior school influenced that decision, but I can't be sure. My older brother didn't go abroad with us that time, as he was at university in England.
57. I went to a school where we lived abroad but I can't remember much about it. I went on a funicular railway to get to and from school. I can remember that the sport was good. We were much better treated at that school, there was no physical punishment. We were encouraged, whereas I wasn't encouraged to do anything at Edinburgh Academy junior school. My time at Edinburgh Academy junior school affected my attitude to schooling.
58. I think I made the transition from primary to secondary school when I was abroad. I must have been at the senior level because when I came back from abroad, I went to the senior school of Edinburgh Academy.

Edinburgh Academy senior school, Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, 196

59. When we came back to Edinburgh, we lived in the same house. The senior school had a big tarmac yard in front of the big school building. There was a row of classrooms on the left.

Location / Layout / Staffing

60. I don't remember a single female teacher at the senior school. The impression I got was that we were tolerated by the staff. It was almost as if we were a nuisance to

them. It was just the general demeanour and attitude. Having had the benefit of going to other schools, at Edinburgh Academy senior school I didn't get the sense that education was for our benefit. It was all just something that you had to go through.

61. Mr Dawson was one of the housemasters of the boarding houses down by Inverleith Row. He and his wife ran one of those. I never heard what went on there. There was a bit of a divide between day-boys and boarders. Some of my class were boarders. I didn't have any of them round to my house, but there were some of the other day-boys who came to my house. One boy was called [REDACTED], and one was called [REDACTED]. We tended to call each other by our surnames.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy senior school

First day

62. Because everyone else seemed to know the system, I felt that I was once again late to the party. Most of the other kids had been together at the junior school and arrived at the senior school as a coherent group. We were all still called by our surnames. There must have been some kind of orientation but there was no concession made to me as a new pupil, as far as I can remember.
63. I felt terrible about going back to Edinburgh Academy. The memories weren't good. My brother had a chat with me about how things would be, but he was a much more sporty person than I was. Edinburgh Academy senior school was a good place for him, but I found it a much more brutal place than the prep school, plus there was peer-to-peer bullying as well.

Mornings and bedtime

64. It was more or less the same journey for me in the morning as it had been at the junior school. There was an unpleasant period at the start of the school day when we were all milling about uncontrolled. Unpleasant things could be said by your peers then.

65. I was relatively glad when lessons began, because that all disappeared, and you had to behave. Then I started to cycle to school instead of getting the bus.

Clothing/uniform

66. For me, the uniform was still shorts, because I hadn't reached six feet in height. It was just a rule they had, I don't know why. You could be fifteen years old and still in shorts. It was still a blue blazer that we had.

Leisure time

67. I remember walking around the back of the school, just so I could be where nobody else was, which isn't right at school. If there was nobody there, I couldn't be got at. You devise your own ways of surviving. The toilets at the back of the school were great because they weren't the main toilets. You could sit in there quite happily for an hour and not be disturbed by other boys.

Trips and holidays

68. I do remember some trips, but I can't remember if they were with the school. There was scout group at St John's church at the end of Princes Street which was pretty much exclusively for Edinburgh Academy boys. I can remember trips with my school friends, but I can't remember if that was organised by the school or the scouts. We went away camping and things.
69. When you think about classic situations for predators you might think of the scouts but there was nothing untoward. There was nothing inappropriate about the scout leaders, who tended to be university-aged men who were inclined to help. There was nothing adverse that happened at scouts. The scouts really saved my life because it was out of school and different.

Schooling

70. We started lessons in the morning, which brought the relief that the kids were under control. We had a mid-morning break and there was a tuck shop where we could buy things like sausage rolls. Then there were more lessons before lunch. After lunch we had lessons but on two afternoons a week, we had games down at the playing fields.
71. I don't really remember how I did academically because I don't have my report cards. I just remember being terrified. Two lessons were particularly bad, maths and history. I just remember feeling all the time that I was failing everything.
72. Even the less academic topics were taught so seriously. We did woodwork, which was the only alternative to academic work. I remember the criticism of me for not being able to do things in woodwork was extreme. The general response was, "How can you be so stupid?" When I was at school abroad, we never did things like woodwork. I don't know how I was expected to know these things.
73. My sense of it was that we were given an explanation of how to do something, but if we couldn't do it, we were given the same explanation. My understanding now is that if someone doesn't get it the first time, you try a different tack. I didn't understand the ethos at Edinburgh Academy senior school.
74. I remember we were being taught how to use a wood plane. We had to write our name on a piece of wood, plane off a shaving, and your name should be on the shaving when you flattened it out. I could never do it. I remember being in tears over it. I was frightened to ask any questions, because you got a bad reaction.
75. We had a nice guy called Hoppy Longson. I think he taught English or history. He was the only gentle influence at Edinburgh Academy senior school. The headmaster was very remote, I don't remember his name. I only saw him occasionally.

Sporting activities

76. I got on a bit better in sporting activities. I was catching up with my peers in terms of size, but I didn't really enjoy sports. I wouldn't have been commended for my sporting abilities at a parents evening.
77. If you were sporting at the senior school, or academically good, life was fine, I think. As I have thought about it, I was a bit vulnerable in that my dad was away, and my mother was busy doing things. I needed a dad around and I think I looked to teachers for more than they could give in those days.
78. I think that once you get tagged as a vulnerable child, you get more targeted. I was without certain support structures that other children would have had. I have learned since being at school that abusers tend to be able to spot the needy children.

Healthcare

79. As a day boy, I don't know about health care at the school. There wasn't anyone available for pastoral care. If there was someone nominated, I don't know who they were.

Religious instruction

80. I don't think we ever had a chaplain at Edinburgh Academy. We had assembly most days and we sang hymns, but that was as far as went.

External Inspections

81. I was never aware of any external inspections at Edinburgh Academy senior school.

Family contact

82. I sent letters to my dad during term time. We had one phone call a year with my dad, which we had to book for Christmas day. It was a ten minute slot that was controlled by the operator. That was all the contact we got with my father. You never knew what to say, you were sharing a ten minute slot with the rest of the family.
83. My mum did say that she regretted moving us about so much, but she and my father were of a generation where, if you went abroad, you definitely sent your children back to Britain for education. By the time my dad finished working abroad, the schools were good enough to go there, but when he started, they weren't. As a parent myself, I consider that it was a reasonable choice, but it was just badly done with us moving to and from schools abroad or in Edinburgh. It should have been one or the other.

Prefects / senior pupils

84. We didn't have prefects at Edinburgh Academy senior school, we had 'ephors'. The ephors were older pupils, probably sixth-formers. I don't know how the ephors were chosen. The ephors had a room by the school gates. In extreme cases, they could take you and beat you there.
85. A boy might be beaten by the ephors for giving cheek or being rude to the ephors. The ephors might be organising pupils into a queue, and if you didn't do what they said, or were pushing, then you would be beaten. You would be beaten for very small misdemeanours. I'm not aware of the ephors having a punishment book to record these beatings, they probably didn't.
86. A feature of the schools in Edinburgh was that they had a short history in comparison to the English public schools. They created a culture that they thought was similar. It was all a kind of show really. There was a tendency among public schools to try and instil character and create leaders of the future. It is a bit like in the military nowadays, where a young soldier is given responsibilities straight away, to try and train them. I

think the intention was the same at Edinburgh Academy senior school. It was kind of an imperial echo.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy senior school

87. The ephors could beat you on the bottom, over your shorts. They had a clachan, but I don't know what else they could beat you with. It was kind of like peer-on-peer bullying but authorised. It was quite sadistic.
88. The ephors used to get boys and force them to bend over, with their head under a table so that they hit their head in reaction to a blow. It was a form of torment. Boys would also be put in that position and not beaten but would have to have to endure the anxiety of an expected blow. I had that once. Nobody hit me, but I was dreading the threat of receiving a blow.
89. There was a man called Mr IJX who was the teacher. He could be excessively violent. He used to hit you on the head with one of the wooden blackboard rubbers. There was one day, I was probably talking to the guy in front of me. I didn't notice that Mr IJX had come back into the classroom. Mr IJX hit me on the back of the head with a book. I think I was concussed from that. I had a headache for a day-and-a-half. That was quite normal. If you stepped out of line, it was physical punishment. Mr IJX in particular did that, but it could be any teacher.
90. Mr IJX would throw the blackboard rubber at people. It was a six inch long piece of wood with felt. By the time it hit you, it was going quite fast. I didn't tell anyone about that. It was the old story of being slightly more in awe of your parents than your teachers, and if you told your parents about being punished like that, you would be in more trouble.
91. I lived in fear when I was at school. It just seemed that the staff were particularly angry with the boys. That was the sense that I had, and I quite accept that could just have been my perception. That was my sense at the time, not looking back now. Until this

year, preparing to speak to the Inquiry, I haven't looked back on my time at Edinburgh Academy.

92. There was a man who I did read somewhere had died, called Mr Dawson. We called him 'Doughy Dawson'. He was the most abusive. I think he was sexually abusive. Mr Dawson taught history, and I think he was our form teacher as well. He had Segs, metal fittings for the base of shoes, which made a clackety noise when he walked. You could always hear him coming. He put on this air of mildly eccentric cheerfulness. He used strange language, strange words. One of his words was, "Cloddy" which I think meant good, or possibly bad. He was the most terrifying bully of my life.
93. Scholastic failings were called out by Mr Dawson, you were ridiculed for getting things wrong. He had a reward system of jellybeans which he kept in a jar. You were rewarded with jellybeans if you got things right, and if you weren't good in his class, you got beaten. Mr Dawson beat us with a ruler, or a stick of some sort.
94. Mr Dawson was a terrible tickler in the classroom. He would tickle you on the ribcage, on top of your clothes. For me that was the worst thing, because I couldn't breathe. I got so tired of being tickled. If Mr Dawson saw you out and about in the grounds and he wanted to talk to you, he would get nearer and nearer so you were always retreating. Even as a child, you felt that it was too close, too intimidating. It was a very threatening sort of behaviour.
95. Behind the main school building is a row of buildings, one of which used to be the dining room. On the left of that there was a little window, which was the tuck shop. Next to that was a flight of stairs going down, with a ramp beside it so you could wheel your bike down, because the bike shed was at the bottom. There was a Fives court down there and some toilets. I spent a lot of time at lunchtime hiding in the toilets. It was the only place I could feel safe.
96. Mr Dawson had a room down next to the toilets near the bike sheds. He used to practice music in there. I know that friends of mine were summoned in there for some punishment. I don't know if they were undressed, but they were spanked and tickled

in there. I can't remember if someone told me that directly, but it was widely known throughout the school what Dawson was like. It happened to me once. I was on the way back from the toilet and Mr Dawson called me in there and I was tickled. I don't know why. It was horrendous. That was the worst thing. Mr Dawson was like a caricature of a good teacher, but he wasn't.

97. There were a few people I was friendly with and could talk to. We would discuss who had been taken in by Dawson and spanked. We didn't know why, you didn't know if you had done something wrong. We were so naïve in those days. Nowadays, kids of ten just say, "Paedo!" straight away. But we didn't know what was going on. It was just part of the culture.
98. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who really suffered under Mr Dawson. As an adult, if you saw someone in distress you would probably try and talk to them about it, but as a child you just don't mention it. But it was pretty obvious that [REDACTED] was badly treated. I remember he was singled out for ridicule. I remember that [REDACTED] brought in a jar of jellybeans for Mr Dawson. He was obviously trying to curry favour. It was a ghastly situation.
99. Mr Dawson wore milk-bottle glasses. He would stare at you, and you just wondered what was going to happen to you. It was low-level, but it was ongoing. It was a risk that was there every day.
100. With regard to peer-to-peer bullying, I think that was because friendship groups existed, and if you weren't in those groups, you were targeted. I don't think the peer-to-peer bullying would have been any worse than at any other school. I think the way that we were treated by the teachers as kids bred a certain violence amongst us. If there is physical punishment that is endemic, then it teaches children how to behave.
101. I don't think I had a particular problem with being bullied, but you just didn't know what was going to happen. I wasn't persistently bullied by my peers, but it was going on. There were kids who were persistently bullied. There was one boy, I can't remember his name, but it was a terrible situation. There were some scholarship places at

Edinburgh Academy senior school, and he had a scholarship. He got terribly bullied for that. Kids picked on him for being different. That was really terrible, and he left the school.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy senior school

102. I never reported anything about Mr Dawson to my parents, or to anyone else. I didn't make any report about anything while I was at the senior school.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy senior school

103. I left Edinburgh Academy senior school when my family moved down to Yorkshire, when I was about thirteen years old. The school I went to in Yorkshire was different to Edinburgh Academy. There was no adverse treatment at all. However, I didn't spend much time in school there. We were allowed to go out of school at lunchtime, so I just didn't go back in the afternoon. I just spent every afternoon in the town. There were a few of us who used to hang about in town, and then go back when it was time for the bus home. My parents were forking out money for my education, so I never told them what I was doing.

Life after Edinburgh Academy

104. I messed up my education and just opted out. That's where I really see the effects of my time at Edinburgh Academy. I think there were attempts by teachers at my subsequent school to find out why I wasn't performing well, but I had just opted out mentally of the whole education system. That persisted for about fifteen years.
105. I think I would have become a drug addict if it hadn't been for some farming friends of my family. They took me under their wing. My parents were preoccupied with another family concern at that time. I wasn't neglected but I was on my own a lot. Had our

family friends not taken me under their wing, I could have been in real trouble. I have learned subsequently that they were really concerned about me. If the school in Yorkshire had really been concerned with evaluating the wellbeing of the children they had, the school might have found out about the difficulties that I was having. However, with an annual intake of about 150 children, that is quite a big ask. But nothing was ever done to find out.

106. I did leave school, but my dad persuaded me to go back and do my A levels. I got so fed up with being there that I left after one year of A levels. I went to do an apprenticeship. It was a bit of a slap in the face for my parents, but they were very good about it. I think deep down my parents realised that the life they had given us was quite difficult. They were conscientious and caring parents, so they probably thought that if they had a part in my difficulties, they couldn't be too critical.
107. Men in authority were a real problem for me, so I tended to reject authority. I didn't want to work for anybody, I didn't really trust anybody. In my early working life, I didn't want anybody to have a part in my life. I was untrainable. I didn't want to learn from anyone. I suppose I was a bit rebellious.
108. I ended up being an apprentice agricultural engineer. Looking back, I rejected careers advice I was given at school because I didn't trust the system. I was a bit headstrong. I think I chose things where I wouldn't fail. My parents did talk to me about going to university, but I just saw that as being a larger school. I now know different. At the time, I just wanted something so simple that I couldn't get it wrong or get into any trouble.
109. I stayed in agricultural engineering for four years, then I moved into farming. I did a lot of farming as an unqualified person, then I went to agricultural college in Devon. I got a number of awards at college because I was more engaged with the eventual outcome that I was happy to do the education. That is because I was there as a mature student. I was 27 years old, whereas my contemporaries were 18 years old. I felt much more able to deal with the situation, I felt I could hold my own. The course wasn't

terribly academic, but it was run more like a school should have been. The attitude of the college was, "What do you want to learn, and how can we help you?"

110. I was in Devon, at college, for three years, then I got a job on a farm in Wiltshire, running a farm for an absentee landlord for five years. That was great and was a kind of reset, because I enjoyed it and was successful at it. After the farm in Wiltshire was sold, I was headhunted for another job, and then another. I have only had two jobs where I wasn't approached for the position.
111. I met my wife and had a family. My wife and I fostered children a few years ago. Our kids had grown up safely, so we wanted to help some kids who were not so well off. We really enjoyed that.

Impact

112. Because of the gym teacher at Edinburgh Academy junior school touching me on the buttocks, I struggled as a young adult with changing in front of other people. I would only do sports where I could get changed at home. I feel more awkward being undressed than I perhaps should.
113. Because of my time at Edinburgh Academy, I didn't want to be in education at all. A more long-term consequence of my experiences at Edinburgh Academy was that I really found it hard to relate to older men. I don't know if it was because of fear, but I really shunned male company.
114. Fifty years on from Edinburgh Academy, I still feel that work is going to be terrible on Monday morning, because of the way I felt on Sunday night at Edinburgh Academy. It's just a habit that has never left me.
115. I think the thing that has really stayed with me was the punishment for not being able to do things. I could understand being punished for bad behaviour, but not for being unable to understand something. That has characterized my ambitions to some extent,

because I have always been worried about getting things wrong, whatever I do. That said, I haven't had a bad life, I just haven't done some of the things I could have done.

116. I haven't earned what I could have done, but I have made enough money to pay the bills, and I am nearly at the end of my working life. I really wanted to be a doctor, but I felt that I couldn't do it. I think that doing a job where you are helping people would be quite a satisfying job.
117. I don't know how rigorously my parents looked at different schools, but my wife and I wanted to make sure that wherever our children went, that they were okay. I didn't want them to go through anything like the situation I went through at Edinburgh Academy. There was one time when the headmaster of the school two of my children were attending changed. I felt there was something not quite right about the new headmaster, so we moved the children to a different school.
118. My wife and I have always been careful to make sure that we could always communicate with our children, and that they could tell us anything. We have always said to the children that wherever they are, if they have a problem, they should ring us. My son once rang us from a camp where there was some unpleasant behaviour, and we just went and got him.
119. I find it really difficult to talk about my feelings, and for a long time I didn't. That has had a real impact on me and my family. It is not a critical issue, but it frustrates my wife that sometimes I just can't talk about things. I would rather not say anything, which is not a good approach. I think that has been very frustrating in my career, because I have been aware for a long time that perhaps I haven't used my talents to the best, and I couldn't bring myself to discuss that issue with anyone. I feel I have undersold myself for a long time. I had a long time without really being able to trust people I didn't know, particularly men.
120. I haven't got many male friends. I would like to have had more male friends, but I just didn't seek their friendship from a very early age. I have got no friends from Edinburgh Academy, and very few from the other secondary school I attended in Yorkshire. I just

wanted to shake off the past, but I see other people having a great time with their schoolfriends. For example, my wife got in contact with a lot of her old schoolfriends during Covid, and now she sees them regularly. There is no one like that I can contact.

121. I feel a bit untethered, like I have no background. My children all feel like they are Wiltshire born and bred, but even though Edinburgh is beautiful, I don't feel that I could ever live in Edinburgh. I feel that there is a gap somewhere, but it is hard to explain it.
122. My wife and I went to Edinburgh with our daughter, and my wife and I had a day on our own. I took her round all the places my family lived, but when we got over the hill on Hanover Street, which was the route that my school bus took, I felt physically sick. It was the same feeling I got going through the gate as a schoolboy. I was more than distressed because I didn't want to be that distressed about it. I couldn't understand why I felt like that when, in my own mind, I had put it to bed. I think that might have been a good early prompt for me to react to Nicky Campbell's programme about Edinburgh Academy. I feel that I got off lightly, like I shouldn't be complaining about it.

Treatment/support

123. As a teenager, I had a terrible, irrational temper which gradually fizzled out. I did go for some anger management around 2006, because the slightest thing would anger me. However, I didn't tell them about the abuse I suffered at Edinburgh Academy, so I didn't give them the best chance to help me.
124. Trying to analyse it, if something in my life is out of control then it feels like a bit like when I was at school, when everything was out of control. I had no agency to change things at all. It is just irrational. It was a long term, corrosive anxiety that can't have done me any good.

Reporting of Abuse

125. As an adult, I haven't made any report to the police or any other agency about the abuse I suffered at Edinburgh Academy. I haven't contacted the Academy to make any complaint. Perhaps I should have done that earlier.

Records

126. I have not sought my records from Edinburgh Academy.

Lessons to be Learned

127. There should have been better management of the teachers at Edinburgh Academy. A good headmaster must have been able to see the signs. There was no formal pastoral oversight at the school. At my final school, we had a Chaplain who taught Religious Education. He was ordained but he wasn't very in touch with the kids.
128. Nowadays, in the workplace, you have to do a pre-existing medical condition questionnaire. If there had been some kind of audit process on my mental health, perhaps my difficulties could have been picked up. However, these things are difficult to pick up, and I might not have answered questions honestly.
129. Edinburgh Academy don't make any mention in their literature about past instances of abuse. I just think that parents who look at a school should be made aware if that school had problems in the past, and how they have been corrected. If you bought a second-hand car, you would want to know if it had been crashed. I don't think I am being vindictive, I just think I would want to know, because the impression that is being given is that everything has always been hunky-dory.
130. I hope that nothing happens again, but if it did, even if it wasn't linked to what happened before, people would ask why they hadn't been told about earlier incidents of abuse

when it all came out. You can check out hospitals now, and when I had heart problems I was advised to go to a particular hospital. That hospital had problems ten years ago, then sorted those problems out and it is now one of the best hospitals for heart problems.

131. I think it would be better if schools had more pastoral oversight for children. Some schools have it, but I don't know how effective it is. It is a problem because I think you have to be slightly politically incorrect to provide that oversight, because you can't ask questions about anything these days. It's hard because that oversight can't be constant and if you did have someone sitting-in to observe a lesson then presumably there wouldn't be any bad behaviour by the teacher at that time.
132. I think that headteachers and governors in particular should be made accountable for things that happen on their watch, because nobody can release the teachers from their positions except the headteacher and governors.
133. If I go to the doctor, to the library, or basically anywhere, I will get a text asking, "How was your experience?" I think there should be something similar for schoolchildren. I know it could be open to abuse, but there should be some way of getting the kids' opinions, because if there is abuse, they are the ones who are suffering it. Leaving aside bogus claims, it would be a good thing. You need the right atmosphere to be able to do that and whistleblowing is not an easy thing.
134. I have often wondered if the abuse that happened at Edinburgh Academy was in some way linked to the fact that the teachers there would have fought in the war. When they came back, their lives would have been in turmoil.
135. I can understand that the sexual abuse was to do with gratification, but with regard to the anger and brutality, how did people look back on their career with any satisfaction?

Hopes for the Inquiry

136. I know, on some level, that what happened to me at Edinburgh Academy wasn't my fault, but I think that someone who is perceived to be in authority saying that abuse happened and that it was wrong, that harm occurred, and people suffered, then that would make a difference.
137. There should be sanctions against those responsible and action taken to prevent these things from happening again. For me, someone to say that I was badly treated and that it wasn't my fault would be enough.

Other information

138. 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..........

Dated.....10/10/2024.....