

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Graeme BROWNLEE

Support person present: No.

1. My name is Graeme Brownlee. I was born in 1968. My date of birth and contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. My parents are John Brownlee and Margaret Brownlee. They have been married for sixty years. My father suffers from Alzheimer's and is currently living in a care home. I have one brother who is two years younger than me, Neil Brownlee. I was born in Edinburgh Western General.

Examination of Facts – criminal process

3. My dad has been accused of the physical abuse of children he taught and cared for at Edinburgh Academy, whilst he was a teacher there and house master at Dundas Boarding House. He was not able to stand trial due to his Alzheimer's, therefore an Examination of Facts was fixed by the court instead. This took place without my dad's presence.
4. The Examination of Facts was in March 2024 and was largely, for us, a futile exercise. The whole business felt like it was already a done deal from the outset. I understand this is not within the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry's remit, but I need our entire dissatisfaction with our experience of this episode recorded publicly.

5. I have read evidence from complainers given to the police and the Inquiry. When I make reference to this evidence I am referring to either or both sources.

Edinburgh Academy

6. I went to Edinburgh Academy from the age of five years old. In those days, the Academy was split over three campuses. There was Denham Green on Clark Road, which housed the kindergarten and primary one and two. I was there from 1973 to 1975. Then I moved to the prep school on Arboretum Road and I was there from Primary 3 to Primary 6.
7. Denham Green was later moved to Arboretum Road. This was not as the result of a fire, as erroneously described by a complainer, as the Denham Green campus was repaired after a fire and served for many more years. The closure of Denham Green was probably a desire on Edinburgh Academy's part to rationalise their real estate.
8. Unusually, at Edinburgh Academy, you moved to the Upper School for Primary 7. Primary 6 was therefore the oldest year educated at Arboretum Road. The Primary 7's were called "Geits" and they were classed as year 1 at the Upper School. We then went all the way up to year 7, which would be known as 6th year in other schools.
9. When I first started school, we were living at [REDACTED].
10. We then moved to Dundas House when I was four years old as my dad was appointed as a house master there. Mum was the house mistress by default and it was a twenty-four-seven role. They did everything really. Nowadays their duties would be described as pastoral and educational, but either way it was twenty-four-seven care for all the boarders.

11. My dad was a teacher at the prep school. Geography was his favourite subject, although he also taught French, Latin, English and Maths. He never taught me or my brother as the timetable was always worked out to avoid this.
12. I lived at Dundas House until I was fifteen years old and then we moved to [REDACTED] just off [REDACTED] for the rest of my school career. That was the house my mum and dad lived in the most as they only moved from there three years ago. It was on three floors and they were both in their eighties when they left there. They lived in [REDACTED] for almost forty years.

Dundas House, Kinnear Road, Edinburgh

Layout/Location

13. I have drawn some floor plans of Dundas House and made them available to the Inquiry. They are not to scale as I am no architect, but hopefully useful. I also have an aerial view photograph of the house itself, taken in the early 1980's, which I have provided the Inquiry with.
14. I think the maximum number of boys we had was twenty, although the numbers would fluctuate on an annual basis. They were eight- to ten-year-olds. There was one that came when he was seven, but we never ever had any six-year-olds.
15. I don't think it was ever fully understood in the Examination of Facts, that Dundas House was our family home as well. We were living cheek by jowl with the boarders. I saw them more often than not.
16. When you came in through the main door you had the boys' common room on the right. That was the biggest room downstairs, with a big bay window and no metal bars on it like was said in the Examination of Facts. The windows at the side did have bars for security, but not at the front of the house. Grilles were only added to the front of

the house when it became the Polish Consulate, contrary to what was said by one of the complainants and evidenced by the many other photos we have of Dundas House.

17. The common room was where the boys did their homework and relaxed, whether it was making models or whatever. The front room on the other side of the hall was the family sitting room for the Brownlees, which was effectively the public reception room. If parents were coming in to visit, we would show them in there. Up the right-hand side behind the common room was the staircase and the boys' library. It was called the library, however although there were books in there, it was more a TV room.
18. Up the left-hand side of the house, behind the family sitting room was the boot room, where the boys kept their outdoor shoes. They wore sandals when they were inside the house. There was also a boys' ground floor WC there. Our family did not have a WC on the ground floor.
19. Moving up the left-hand side of the house was the pantry/laundry room, where the boys kept their tuck boxes and the laundry was processed. The house boys' did not have to do their own laundry. Behind that was our family living room which led to the kitchen. The kitchen originally had its own door leading onto the main hallway, but this was blocked off when the kitchen was renovated. The living room was the one where my family would eat as the dining table was there and very much our family living space. The boys were allowed everywhere on this floor except the family living room and family sitting room.
20. Just off the living room was a granny flat and the boiler was there on the ground floor. Above it was a spare room where my grandparents would stay if they were visiting. There was also a utility room downstairs at the back with storage. Dad had a workshop there, where he kept paint and tools.
21. At the back of the house on the ground floor there was also a long timber built shed, split internally into a garden shed and bicycle shed. This single building was of pent roof design and leaned to the back of the house.

22. On the first floor above the common room was “the big dorm” as we called it. The number of beds varied as when we first moved in it was single beds, six or seven of them, but then bunkbeds were installed to cope with the increased demand. The view from that room of the Edinburgh skyline was spectacular. I never appreciated it at the time, but I have a picture of that I have provided the Inquiry with. Dad’s study was opposite the big dorm at the left of the front of the house.
23. Continuing anticlockwise, behind the big dorm was the stairwell and then my and my brother’s bedroom. Then there was the matron’s day room, which later became my brother’s bedroom when we had no residential matron. Adjacent to dad’s study was the house boys’ WC and then our WC and the family bathroom. Between this bathroom and the stairwell was the linen cupboard.
24. At the very back was mum and dad’s bedroom and outside their window was a platform for the fire escape with a ladder on a chain. One of the boys stated that they could not use the toilet at night because it was adjacent to mum and dad’s bedroom and they could not flush it. The boys WC was nowhere near mum and dad’s bedroom as you can see from my drawing.
25. The stairway and hall were all common areas. With the exception of our living room and our kitchen, we could not move from one of our rooms to another without going down the common hall or stairs. I remember running in my pyjamas from my room to the toilet so as not to be seen by the boarders. I was living there from the age of four and some of the boys were a bit older than me. Dundas House was not like the senior houses, where the family quarters were segregated purpose-built accommodation. Mackenzie House, I believe, was a bit more hybrid.
26. The top floor had another two dormitories at the front of the house for the older boys. They had about three or four beds each in them. It might have been more when bunkbeds were introduced. The space between them was where the boys’ trunks were stored. They were huge, big trunks as many of the boys came from abroad. Going up

the lefthand side of the house was a bathroom and WC and the final room was the matron's bedroom that later became the house tutor's bedroom.

27. Along the back of the house was another storage room that was later converted into another bathroom as the number of boarders increased. At the back, right-hand side of the house was the matron/house tutor sitting room.
28. Dundas House was on a public street, at the open end of Kinnear Road with direct access to Newfield playing fields. This was a busy area with parents dropping off and picking up children, not least at weekends when match fixtures were taking place. There was a whole hub of activity going on in the environment around Dundas House. It was very much in the public eye to anyone passing.

Dundas House - State of repair

Letters to the rector

29. I have provided the Inquiry with two original letters from dad to the rector, [REDACTED], about the state of repair of Dundas House when we moved in. As previously stated, we moved in in 1972 and the letters are dated 1973.
30. The stairs were uncarpeted. All the electric sockets were of the round pin metal types. They were quite big chunky things and were often still live even when they were switched off. We were forever going around looking for 5 amp to 15 amp adapters and vice versa. I believe the previous house mistress, did not like tradesmen in the house, so there was a lot of work needing done.
31. The point I am trying to make with these letters is that dad repeatedly pushed for improvements to the house as he knew it was not acceptable. Mum and dad pushed for night storage heaters as the free-standing paraffin heaters which were originally suggested by the then Bursar, were clearly a recipe for disaster. Aside from other free-

standing electric convection heaters, the only other forms of heating were gas fires with ceramic bars that would glow orange. They were only in the four big rooms in the house and dad's study.

32. The first letter to the rector is dated 6th July 1973 with a response dated 9th July 1973. We have also provided the Inquiry with the original copy of this and a second letter from dad dated 23rd August 1973 with a response from the rector dated 3rd September 1973. These letters are about required repairs to Dundas House.

Improvements

33. Dad did try to make the house better for the boys. He states in the letters that he is prepared to do the work himself to save on cost. He did actually repaint the boys' library himself. It was such a dark, gloomy room before. He was always trying to make things better for the boarders, and not just in terms of the fabric of Dundas itself as I will touch on later.

Routine at Dundas House

Mornings and bedtime

34. In the mornings we would all be woken up with a knock on our door by my dad and then we would get washed and dressed. I would hear all the boarders in the Big Dorm on the first floor where my bedroom was, thundering up the stairs to get washed. It was a noisy house with that many children in it. The boarders would all line up in the hallway and then they would walk unsupervised over to the prep school for breakfast and then return to Dundas to get ready for school.

Mealtimes/Food

35. The boarders had all their meals over at the prep school, including breakfast. We ate our meals in the family dining room, but would sometimes go to the prep school for our evening meal if we were late back from a weekend trip or something. That was not that often. Lunch was provided at school, as part of the normal school day, but also at weekends. There was a rota for all housemasters and tutors to supervise the meals that the boarders attended. In the course of a normal weekday at the prep school, pupils would sit at designated tables with their class teachers.
36. The pantry in Dundas House had the boys tuck boxes in it and that is where they kept their snacks and sweeties.

Washing/Bathing

37. The boiler was wholly inadequate for providing hot water and would have had a direct impact on how hot the water was for baths. I only had a hot bath when I went to my grandparents. I thought baths were always tepid.
38. The resident matron was supposed to share toilet facilities with young boys. The boys' idea of a clean toilet compared to the matron's was very different, so it was impossible to find a matron prepared to reside with such inadequate facilities. We then got Valerie Henderson who was the day matron and came every weekday.

Clothing/Uniform

39. I have already mentioned how dad pushed for improvements to the fabric of Dundas, but he was also keen for the boarders to be able to attend evening meals in their "mufti", mufti being the term used for non-uniform clothing. ICH [REDACTED] the rector, wouldn't hear of it and said they must wear their school uniform. Dad was continuously trying to improve their lot and make things better for them, but none of that appeared to come out during the Examination of Facts.

40. The boys' laundry was undertaken by external contractors and was sent off and delivered back in big laundry baskets. Later on, presumably to reduce costs, a big industrial sized machine was installed in the pantry for the boys laundry, and later on a tumble drier, which was rather a novelty. There were also two cleaners, Mrs Park and Mrs Kerry. They were lovely and very thorough.

Leisure time

41. Dundas boarding house has been portrayed as if everyone was tiptoeing around in eternal fear, but it was nothing like that at all. It was a pleasantly noisy, happy house. We were lucky as there was lots of green space. We had the field across the road where the boys used to play after school.
42. I would often go into the common room with the boys and sometimes day boys would also visit. We did all sorts of things together. We had a lot of common interests like building model aeroplanes.
43. We were all taken places at weekends, such as swimming to Drumsheugh Swimming baths where the school was a member. Weekend trips also included walks in the Pentlands or down the coast to East Lothian.

Trips and holidays

44. It was rare for mum and dad to have time off during term time. We would sometimes do stuff at the weekends if the house tutor looked after the boarders, but we would invariably be back for tea or the evening. I don't think a tutor was ever left on their own overnight. In the holidays, including half-term, it was just us as a family in Dundas, as all the boarders returned to either their immediate families or their designated relatives.

Schooling

45. When I was at prep school, we all left at the same time to go over to school. Dad would check everyone was smart and their hair was brushed. That has been given a completely different spin in other evidence, this uniform check was invariably after breakfast, not before, another of the many false memories presented as fact.
46. Dad taught in what was known as the sixth block, so named because it primarily housed the Primary 6 classes. That building has since been demolished as it was unsafe, but it is seen in relation to the rest of the prep school from the old ariel photo I have submitted. There were four classrooms in that block and dad's classroom was on the second floor, which was the same floor as the staff room. My own Primary 6 year was in the classroom next to dad. I just want to highlight this, so it is in the public domain. If dad was doing everything the complainers said in his class, other teachers, of which there would have been over 25 at the very least in the block during dad's time, and around a 100 staff in total in his career of over 30 years at the Academy would have been aware, but with no comment.
47. I also have a picture from dad's classroom that I have given to the Inquiry. Now I know this is just a snapshot, but it is a picture of his classroom blackboard on 14th February 1994, where the pupils have decorated it. Written in chalk is "6b is the best, Monday = fun = no work". This is showing that children enjoyed being taught by dad and felt able to decorate the board with no repercussions. It is a spontaneous show of appreciation. As a teacher myself I think what is forgotten is the rapport you build up with classes over days, weeks, months or even years. I have also provided the Inquiry with two photos of different classes of dads. Neither picture shows any sense of fear or intimidation on the part of the pupils, quite the opposite. In one of the pictures the boys are wearing white shirts, which were only worn in the summer term, ie. Towards the end of the session, not the early stage.
48. We had three consecutive house tutors at Dundas House. They lived at Dundas, but taught at the upper school at Henderson Row, not at the prep. If these teachers had any concerns of Dundas House and how it was being run, they were teaching at Henderson Row and therefore had direct access to the Rector. There is no evidence

that any such concerns were raised. Edinburgh Academy has produced no evidence either.

49. Dad supervised the boarders' homework, or prep as it was called, in the evenings, but I did prep in my own room. Every Wednesday another teacher would supervise prep to give my dad an evening off, but latterly we had the house tutors and they shared the duties on a rota with dad. On occasions, another member of staff would also take the boys on days out during the weekends. This illustrates the direct contact with other teachers that the boarders had in Dundas House.
50. It didn't seem unusual having house tutors in my house as we didn't know any different. We were just so used to living in the boarding house and it just seemed normal.

Sporting activities

51. Sport is important at any school in the independent sector as it is a tangible manifestation as to what the school is all about. My dad coached primary six rugby and I don't think at the prep it ever got to the stage where people were obsessed by it. Some of the boys might have been obsessed by sport, but as far as Dad and his team were concerned, if they lost, they lost and that was all there was to it. To suggest, as it has been, that there was a climate of fear amongst his teams is pathetic. If that was the case, mum and dad's current home would not be full of trinkets and ornaments presented by various teams over the years.
52. There were rugby and cricket matches more or less every Saturday and dad would be meeting parents' week in and week out, with no idea who he would meet or when. I would see him talking to people in a semi-official capacity. He was not someone the parents only saw at parents evenings and was perfectly happy to speak to any parent at any time.

Healthcare

53. The school had a GP practice assigned to the school, and a doctor attended the boarding houses every day for inoculations and to treat illness. They would host a surgery at one of the houses every day for the boarders in all the houses.
54. Would the doctors not have noticed the injuries allegedly inflicted by dad, but again there is no record of any concern being raised. The complainers state repeatedly that the school knew what was going on and did nothing. They talk about dad assaulting someone in the school hall and the teachers there turning a blind eye because they were too scared to report things. It just does not make any sense at all that all these professionals, even the doctors, turned a blind eye to these alleged assaults. I find this very hard to believe. This is just not how schools work, whether this is the present day or decades ago, that other staff members would not intervene or report a member of staff who was seen to be assaulting a pupil.

Birthdays and Christmas

55. We would have cake in the common room when it was a boarder's birthday and I remember that happening. Either mum or dad would be supervising as candles were lit and we would all sing happy birthday while the birthday boy squirmed with embarrassment. The cutting of the cake was the only time there was screaming in Dundas, as the tradition was that when the boy cut into the cake, everyone would scream as loudly as they could, before dissolving into giggles.
56. There was one family that sent in a piñata for one of their sons, and dad set that up at the side of the house for everyone to have a turn at. Birthdays were always celebrated. Every year mum and dad also put on a Christmas party, which was held in the common room towards the end of term.

Discipline

57. Mum and dad were keen to make sure we were not favoured in the house. We were expected to 'toe the line' as well as everyone else. We always had to be smart for

school. We understood we were different from the boarders but conversely it was our home as well. Looking back, it was an odd way to grow up, but I really didn't know any different.

58. I never saw any corporal punishment at the prep school, either by dad or anyone else.

Former Pupils at Edinburgh Academy

Giles Moffat

59. Giles Moffat is the prime mover behind all of this, along with maybe four or five others. He was four years younger than me. Out of all the people, I still can't believe that he is saying the things about dad that he is. He is not the Giles Moffatt we knew. Yes, he was a character, but he was likeable. I have met him in the street perhaps two or three times since I left school and we have stopped and chatted. There was no inkling of anything at all and he always asked kindly after both mum and dad. It makes his attack on both of them even harder to comprehend.
60. Giles Moffatt criticised Lady Smith publicly for saying in her Inquiry findings report on Loretto that some people had had a nice time at Loretto School. He just wanted publicity to strengthen his case that no one had a good time at Edinburgh Academy, when in fact lots of people did. We were put on to our defence lawyer by one of dad's former pupils, who along with his brothers all flourished at the Academy. It is important to stress that Moffatt and his band do not speak for all Accies or indeed the wider Accie community at all.

61. Moffatt said his first experience of hill walking was on one of the Dundas House trips to Blair House. I was on that walk as well and he did enjoy it. It is interesting that one of his main recreations in adult life is as a direct result of dad introducing him to the great outdoors.
62. Giles Moffatt returned to France for a year, several years after he had moved on to the Upper School. Giles spoke of how boarding school was viewed as a form of punishment in France. Well, that's not necessarily the view in the UK. After his year in France he returned not just to the UK, but also to Edinburgh Academy, where he had supposedly had such a miserable time. Being older, he presumably had more say in where he was schooled, but he still came back. It doesn't make sense at all.
63. On his return to the Academy, Giles Moffatt volunteered to be part of the stage lighting crew. This activity was supervised usually by upper school staff for school productions and these productions almost exclusively took place in the prep school hall. The lighting gallery was above the gym. If Giles Moffatt was so frightened of dad, it seems unlikely he would have chosen to undertake an activity that was held a stone throw away from where Dad's classroom was. Yet again, it makes absolutely no sense at all. Giles would have intentionally increased his chances of running into dad, on a campus that he otherwise would have had no need to be at.
64. On 15th January 2023 Giles Moffatt posted on Facebook, "Anyone know how to set up a fake Facebook account? One of my new year's resolutions is to take up serious trolling." This is [REDACTED] before we knew anything about the allegations against dad. This is someone who presents himself as this holier than thou type who is the spokesperson for the Edinburgh Academy Survivors' Group yet posts something like this. One of my brother's friends saw his post on Facebook and sent it to my brother. It gives you an insight into how Moffatt's mind works and I have provided a screenshot of this post to the Inquiry.
65. In one of Moffatt's press statements, he states that he "...puts his faith in the Scottish justice system" and yet he openly disregards the law of the land when it suits him. He

had the brass neck recently to call for Lady Smith's resignation from the Inquiry because of her governor connections with a private school, and yet shamelessly parades his contempt for the law in the public domain.

66. The most ridiculous allegations against my dad also come from Giles Moffatt, the alleged garden shed incident. This particular allegation is full of factual errors. The shed was not "next to the vegetable patch" as stated in Moffat's reply to Lady Smith's question as to the shed's location. This can be clearly seen from the aerial photo mentioned previously. Nor was the lock a padlock, it was a large heavy Edwardian era mortice lock with a chunky key. Furthermore, there was zero corroboration in the Examination of Facts and the two other boys who he said were with him declined to give evidence, presumably because they did not want to perjure themselves.
67. Moffatt said that they were locked in the shed all weekend and mum brought them bread and water once a day or something like that. It would be a huge risk for mum and dad to do this with absolutely no benefit at all. To lock children in a shed with no natural light, with sharp bladed gardening tools, pesticides and God knows what else, would have been sheer madness on their part. Not one other person supported this despite Giles saying other people were locked in the shed with him. Mum, a responsible adult, gave evidence in court about this and was disregarded even though there was absolutely no corroboration at all. Giles Moffatt also admitted that he suffers from brain damage as a result of a self-inflicted codeine overdose.
68. The bike shed was not at the back of the garden near the vegetable patch as Giles Moffatt suggested. You had to go up about twelve stone steps to get to the back garden where the vegetable patch was. There was no outbuilding of any description in the back garden. The shed was huge and was subdivided into a small garden shed area and a larger bike storage area with an internal wall dividing the two. There are so many factual errors in what has been said so far, it is astonishing. Nothing seems to have been cross checked by the police or the crown office. Again, this can be verified by the 1980's aerial photo I have supplied to the Inquiry.

69. The other allegation from Moffatt concerned a hose. It was alleged that dad stripped a boy who apparently wet his bed and put a hose somewhere on him. That allegation takes us into a whole different sphere from any of the other allegations and is probably one of the deciding factors in proceeding to court. The media consistently fail to make it clear that dad was accused of physical abuse and nothing sexual. I want to make this clear as it is not at all clear in some of the press articles.
70. If dad had inserted a hose into someone's anus there would have been medical repercussions for that. There would have been medical evidence somewhere. There was nothing to support any of these claims and not one of the many witnesses who were apparently made to watch this alleged event corroborated it.
71. Giles Moffatt also said there was a six-year-old in the house. Yet again, this is factually incorrect. There was never a six-year-old boarder in Dundas House, ever. That fact is verifiable by the Academy's own records which are in the public domain and should surely have been checked by the police and the crown office had they been thorough in their preparation. I have more to say about both the police and the crown office later.
72. Giles Moffat said that a boarder called [REDACTED] was punished for having asthma, but [REDACTED], who spoke to the inquiry, never mentioned it. If [REDACTED] was taken away to another room during an asthma attack, it would have been to help him recover in peace without everyone else gawping at him. Every action is given a negative spin by Moffatt.
73. Giles Moffatt also said that dad would use the "N" word. I just can't see dad using a word like that. He has been a fan of jazz music all his life and his favourite artist is Oscar Peterson, who was black. There are more Oscar Peterson CD's in the house than any other artist, by a considerable number. Dad took me to see the surviving members of the band who had played in the 1956 film High Society at the Queen's Hall. They were mainly black artists and driving up beforehand he was so excited about seeing these musicians who he had idolised for most of his life. The colour of their skin never entered his mind. It's yet another of Giles Moffatt's desperate attempts

to nail dad for something. I never heard my dad use the "N" word or say any other racist thing. It was an irrelevance to him.

74. It appears that some of the boarders believe that with dad unable to participate in any of the proceedings, they can have free rein with what they say. Mum, fortunately, still has all her lemon drops and remembers each and every boarder, their home life, the circumstances of their becoming boarders, and any medical conditions they had.
75. Giles Moffatt also makes reference to being unable to settle during his first night in the boarding house because of the festival fireworks which would certainly have been clearly seen from the windows at Dundas. He arrived at the Academy in 1980, but the festival fireworks did not start until 1982. Yet again he is saying things that if anyone had bothered to check, don't tally.
76. Giles Moffatt stated in his evidence that the Brownlees had an annexe to live in at Dundas House, but as you can see from the photographs and plans that I have shown you, we did not. Nearly everything he says is factually wrong. He said that dad had shown some pornographic videos to them that he got from the police and reminded them that he had friends in the police. Yet again, there is zero corroboration and zero evidence.
77. We were all told in the criminal court not to speak with other witnesses. I am not on social media, but my brother Neil is and he unfriended anyone from the school that was giving evidence at dad's trial so there could be no cross contamination. He need not have bothered.
78. Moffatt admitted in his evidence to the criminal court that he had been in the pub the night before he was due to give evidence, with other accusers and they had been talking about the case. These witnesses had already given their evidence and he was still to give his evidence. The sheriff did nothing about that and had the nerve to say to us after we had given our defence evidence, not to discuss the case with anyone.

79. Finally, with regard to Giles Moffatt, he sent his own children to Edinburgh Academy, at least for the initial part of their education, at the prep school in Arboretum Road no less. An astonishing step for someone to take in view of his apparently awful experience.

ICD

80. In his evidence, ICD talks about 5 Kinnear Road when Dundas was actually 2 Kinnear Road. A small error, but which again demonstrates what little attempt was made to ensure his statement is accurate. He talks about only being seven years old when he arrived at Dundas House, but he was only seven for the first fortnight, so he was eight for the vast majority of that session in Dundas. He talks about being homesick which is understandable. He said he was slight as a child, but I never thought of him as that, he was certainly more athletic than I was and sturdy. We were in the same year at school.
81. I remember one time we were going to make a film, as ICD said he had access to what I assume at the time was a "cine" camera. I typed out the credits onto a roll of paper using dad's typewriter and fashioned a crude rolling system using a cardboard box and two lengths of bamboo. I couldn't get the paper roll to work smoothly and I remember dad helping us make it work, so he was hardly this scary person if he was helping us with projects. As usual with many ideas at that age, the film was never made, as the cine camera never appeared.
82. When we were in Primary 5, the prep dining hall suffered a bad fire, which meant it could not be used for a period of many months. Weekday lunchtimes were mainly packed lunches, although soup stations were also provided. Supplying meals for the boarders was a significant problem which was solved by Christian Salvesen, who at the time had offices, with catering facilities, at the opposite end of Kinnear Road. This is where the boarders' meals were served until the school's own dining hall was repaired. As there were no other catering facilities within walking distance of the boarding houses, this was a godsend. I remember dad being very annoyed at ICD

ICD [REDACTED] when he saw him using one of the easy chairs as a trampoline whilst waiting in the queue. The reputation of the Academy was always very important to dad and he would certainly have been annoyed that this foolish action was jeopardising this company's relationship with the Academy. I think he would have got a 'chewing out' about it, but I did not see or hear anything. The complainers frequently state that they were punished even if they didn't do anything, but the reality is usually different.

83. ICD [REDACTED] talks at length about dad's alleged assaults. The stairs from the ground floor to the first floor in Dundas House were two flights of stairs and the first flight was very long. It started immediately at the downstairs hallway. The stairs between the middle floor and the top floor were much steeper, as they had further up to get before they got to our bedroom door, as is clear from my floor plans.
84. For ICD [REDACTED] to suggest he was pushed down these top stairs by dad is just absolutely crazy. He states that the stairs he was allegedly pushed down was the "non carpeted section". No part of the one and only staircase was carpeted, yet another factual error. The stairs were covered with a green linoleum, with a white non-slip rubber tread on the edge. If anyone was to fall down these stairs it could have been fatal or a hospital trip with a broken limb at the very least, which would have required a lot of explaining. It makes absolutely no sense at all for dad to have taken this enormous risk.
85. ICD [REDACTED] has served in the armed forces, in what appears to be front line duty. No doubt he has experienced some appalling sights during his service, yet we are meant to believe that his time in Dundas House appears to eclipse everything else.
86. Another person who I can't remember now talks about dad rattling a snooker cue up the banister of the stairs. The banisters were not your typical domestic banisters, but were very thick, almost the thickness of a human thigh, so this would have been really difficult to do. It would have just sounded like someone thumping up the stairs.

[REDACTED]

87. [REDACTED] was a fragile soul and very accident prone. He arrived from Hong Kong and took a while to settle. Dad noticed that he always had his hand in his mouth and it transpired that he had toothache. We had a family appointment to go to our dentist, but dad said he would forego his appointment so that [REDACTED] could be seen to.
88. Giles Moffatt states that he and [REDACTED] were singled out. They were singled out, but only in that they both needed a lot of support, albeit in different ways. Arriving with toothache would not have been the best start for anyone. [REDACTED] talks about Dundas House as being cold and inhumane, but I just don't get that. He also talks about escalating violent behaviour from dad, but no bruising. It doesn't make sense.
89. [REDACTED] was the first person I knew to have asthma and the device he had was different to the discrete inhalers in use today. [REDACTED]'s device was large with a propelling wheel. This idea that he was sent to another room, or upstairs as a punishment is just crazy. As I have already stated, moving to another room was to enable him to recover in peace. [REDACTED] chose not to proceed with his evidence at the criminal trial.
90. Contrary to what Giles Moffatt said, it was [REDACTED], not [REDACTED], who cut his ear on a piece of groundsman's equipment, in the playing field in front of Dundas House after school one day. I have supplied a picture of this field with Dundas boys playing in it. He also fell and broke a finger once and needed an operation. Mum took him to the Western General, waited with him for hours and even had to go into theatre with him as he was so scared. This was hardly the actions of someone cold and inhumane.
91. [REDACTED] talks about letters home being vetted, but had there been no help with letters, no letters would have gone home at all in some cases. Trying to get eight, nine and ten-year-olds to write letters was not easy as any parent who has had to repeatedly

ask their children if they have written their Christmas thank you letters would recognise.

92. It is also worth pointing out that boarders had ample opportunity to send letters, other than those written during designated letter writing time. These could have been passed to day boys at school for posting at any time. Alternatively, if they were not involved in matches on a Saturday morning, the boys were able to go round to the shops at Goldenacre to spend their pocket money. This was an unsupervised activity and presented the perfect opportunity to send a letter to anyone with any content they wished. The idea that their communication with home was only through dad is false.

IBI

93. IBI was another complainer against dad in the criminal trial. He is so vague with details that he states he could not remember if his own brother was in Dundas House with him over the time the allegations took place. I have a picture of those boarders in 198 which clearly shows that IBI and his brother were in the house at the same time, together. That was the picture that was repeatedly used. It beggars belief IBI can't remember that his own brother was in the house at the same time.

94. These complainers are so sure about their memories, but are then so vague about other aspects because, they haven't even bothered to check the basics. The court has relied on the accuracy of their testimonies, but yet again, this is another glaring factual error that could, and should, have been checked by the authorities if they had been bothered.

95. IBI stated that bed wetting in Dundas House was dealt with well. Giles Moffat said in his evidence to the Inquiry that bedwetters would be dragged out of their bed and thrown in a cold bath. Moffatt is also in the above-mentioned photograph with IBI at Dundas House, so they were there at the same time, yet with polarising

views on how bedwetting was handled. Moffatt is the only one to comment negatively on bed wetting.

96. IBI also talks about mum letting him into our family sitting room to let him watch a television programme that the rest of the house boys didn't want to watch on their television. Again, hardly cold and inhumane treatment from mum.
97. IBI speaks about being made to work in the garden in the cold and digging soil with his bare hands. Dad was a keen gardener and to suggest that this was some sort of punishment is ridiculous. There would have been tools provided. Again, dad would have no motive for making them work with their bare hands in the depths of winter. There would have been zero benefit to him and mum having all the boarders off school with colds and chills. This would have resulted in a huge amount of extra work for them both and questions being asked as to how all the houseboys came to be ill. Gardening is regarded as a panacea these days, so maybe my dad was just ahead of his time.
98. IBI talks about having difficulties with his own parents and mentions his "screaming matches" with them. This is a common theme with the complainers who were boarders in that they had often had issues with their own parents, compounded by being sent away to board. I have every sympathy with that, as I would have hated to be a boarder.
99. Some of the boarders' parents were at the other side of the world and it can't have been pleasant. Boarding must have been an unhappy time for some of them, but it was not of mum and dad's doing. They did not send them away. They did all they could to try and make boarding life as normal and fulfilling as possible. I also think that many of these complainers are transposing their own familial difficulties and unhappiness onto mum and dad. Today's culture is always to blame someone else for your woes, when the problem lies closer to home, as I will elaborate on later.

Nicky Campbell

100. First of all, in my opinion he has abused his power at the BBC to inflate the coverage Edinburgh Academy has received, providing a platform far above what other schools have received. Other private schools have not had this level of coverage and Edinburgh Academy seems to have been made bigger than everything, due to Campbell using his position with a state-owned broadcaster to further his own personal interests.
101. Nicky Campbell admitted in his evidence that he tried to get dad on his radio show in the 1990s to entrap him. His producer said to dad on the phone, that Campbell, wanted to interview him about his humorous personality and good impressions, but dad declined as in the moment, he couldn't remember who Nicky Campbell actually was. This was the pre internet/smart phone era, so we couldn't just Google a picture of him. Campbell then subsequently admitted decades later that he was trying to get dad on his show to give him "both barrels". I was visiting mum and dad when the call came in and can remember it quite clearly.
102. BBC guidelines, section 6, states quite clearly that people should not be brought on to BBC programmes under false pretences and should be treated fairly. Campbell clearly believes that the rules don't apply to him at the BBC.
103. Campbell also talks about hearing rumours about Dundas House when he was in the prep school. This is quite an achievement as we did not move into Dundas House until he was in the upper school at Henderson Row. Whatever he is talking about in Dundas, it is not during our time there. At the risk of repeating myself, this is yet another instance of something being stated as fact when a cursory check of dates would have proved otherwise.
104. He also talks about receiving corporal punishment from dad and laughing about it to the rest of the class, making faces and in his own words "pretending it was sore". Clearly, he wasn't bothered about it, treating it as a big joke, but more importantly if he was "pretending it was sore", it presumably wasn't sore and was therefore not being administered in the out of control, crazed manner as described elsewhere.

105. He talks about another teacher, Margaret Baxter, giving him a ruler over his knuckles, but she was “of her time”. So, it is ok for a female member of staff to issue corporal punishment, but not dad.
106. I have no doubt dad used corporal punishment, which incidentally was legal at the time, but one of the main instigators of this whole witch-hunt admits that the corporal punishment he received from dad wasn’t sore.
107. There were quotes made by Nicky Campbell in the Edinburgh Academy 175th anniversary book, page 50, 1990. He states, “I could only play myself, a mad ego maniac” and “At last his early talent for making smart arse remarks from the back of the classroom was being recognised as the art form he always felt it to be”. He talks about being badly behaved, loud and insolent in his evidence to the Inquiry. He states that he was always causing anarchy, anything for attention. It is little wonder he received corporal punishment. In my opinion, Nicky Campbell had no self-awareness, he didn’t realise until much later in life that he had been expelled from the Academy. You don’t get expelled in the independent sector for nothing.
108. Campbell states that he never said anything to his parents of his experiences at the time because it would have “broken their hearts” in view of the sacrifices they were making to send him to the Academy. This certainly tugs at the heartstrings, but the reality is somewhat different. One of mum’s best friends worked alongside Sheila Campbell at Rosslynlee Hospital and her recollections cast a rather different light on Campbell’s attitude to his parents. Sheila Campbell frequently said with regard to her adopted son, “I wonder what I’m going back to today?” An example of this would be Campbell bringing his pals back to smoke, which Sheila Campbell didn’t like. The only priority in Nicky Campbell’s life is Nicky Campbell and clearly has been since an early age.
109. Campbell did a podcast with two other accusers after the Examination of Facts and he said that dad was found guilty on all counts. This was not true as firstly, some

allegations were dismissed. Secondly, and more importantly, in an Examination of Facts there is no guilty or not guilty verdict. The charges are either found or not found. If the much-vaunted BBC Verify is worth anything, it should be looking at what its own licence payer funded presenters are saying and ensuring that anything they say, especially when the topic is of a vested personal interest, is reported accurately. If nothing else, it renders the BBC "duty of care" protocol meaningless.

IKA

110. IKA is another one of the main movers against dad, along with Giles Moffatt and Nicky Campbell. I had never heard of him until the Inquiry, nor was he ever mentioned by dad. He is yet another one that just goes on guess work and supposition with regard to dad's supposed motives. His first factual error is saying that dad was originally from Leven, when he is not, he is from Kirkcaldy.
111. IKA also said that dad applied to the private sector because he had a chip on his shoulder and a grudge against them, which is not true, as is covered in detail later. IKA admits himself to behaving appallingly at the school and says he wasn't happy there, yet he still decided to send his own children there. It can't have been that bad. IKA also admits to having issues with his own parents. This could be another case of transposing his own family problems onto someone else.
112. IKA talks about meeting dad at Golf Club and wanting to bury a five iron in dad's head. That is completely at odds with our own experiences at which I will go into in detail later.
113. Mum and dad's name and address was publicly available in the phonebook until about five years ago. I suggested they came off it as my father-in-law was getting phone calls from scammers and it seemed sensible to do the same with mum and dad. For all dad's school life and after when we were in everyone knew where he lived, but IKA thought it was mysterious that they had moved house. Mum and dad moved house in December 2021, over two years before we knew anything was

afoot, but as usual this house move was portrayed as being of more sinister significance.

114. IKA [REDACTED] talks about being the only person in his year who didn't live in a big house and that he was aware of the financial sacrifices his parents had made to send him to a private school. It is unlikely that any eight-to ten-year-old would be aware of their parents' financial reality. Children can't conceive what the running cost of a household is at that age. IKA [REDACTED] was also very critical of his own parents in his statement, despite the sacrifices they had apparently made on his behalf.
115. IKA [REDACTED] also says that the boarders were not allowed out, but they were. Another factual inaccuracy by someone who was never a boarder. Some stays away were planned well in advance, but boarders could also be asked out at short notice. It was an Academy requirement that every boarder had someone close by, usually a relative, in this country, if their parents lived abroad. Boarders could be asked out at very short notice. I know this for a fact as I would sometimes answer the phone and it would be so-and-so wanting to take "Johnny" away for the weekend, sometimes at one day's notice. I didn't give permission of course but would go and find mum or dad to take the call. The idea that dad worked things out so there was always enough notice for bruises to have disappeared, for example, is complete rubbish, and illustrates a total misunderstanding of how the boarding houses worked.
116. It was the same for day boys who would have been going home every day. They were at an age where they would have been having supervised baths by their parents, but apparently never saw all these terrible injuries and bruises that the complainers talk about.
117. IKA [REDACTED] also talks about a lot of Academy teachers living in Trinity, as this is supposedly of significance. This was a time when most people lived closer to their place of work and with all three campuses of the school on the north side of the city, why wouldn't teachers be living in Trinity. Again, IKA [REDACTED] sees suspicious activity when there is none.

IWO

118. IWO was in my brother's year and not a particularly smiley person. He has had tragedy in his life. His brother, [REDACTED], who was also at the Academy, was killed in a car crash. His girlfriend died in a terrorist incident, but we are led to believe the most traumatic thing in his life was when he was at Dundas House. He did not mention losing his brother or girlfriend in his evidence to the Inquiry, which is astonishing.
119. IWO said that mum was cold in Dundas House and enjoyed their suffering. He said that they only ever saw the back of her head, which is just astounding because if they only saw the back of her head, it was probably because she was going off to do the next task on their behalf. This is when it starts to stray into the territory of blaming the whole family. It started off with dad, but then mum was brought into it and that is just appalling. I have spoken to other boarders who have said she was never cold. It is just unforgiveable.
120. IWO did not mention that mum once took him to the Western General Hospital for suspected concussion after a rugby game. She says she can still visualise him lying there in accident and emergency in his games kit. Hardly the actions of a cold and uncaring person. Mum was quite frequently at the Western General Hospital with boarders who had suffered games injuries outwith the house.
121. IWO also said in court that dad had confiscated a gift of a toy he had been given and Neil and I were playing with them in front of him. That was the first we had heard of that. We had our own toys and I can't think of the number of times our toys were mislaid or packed up in error when boarders left the house.
122. IWO said he witnessed physical abuse on a daily basis to the Inquiry. He said that we were lined up to go to school and our hair was combed violently and painfully by dad. It was made out to sound like dad had a special comb or something. I know the comb, as he used it on his own hair. It was a metal comb, presumably for hygiene

reasons, but was not particularly fine toothed. It was a comb for use on human hair. It was known what was required in the morning and if your hair had to be combed it was because you were not doing your hair properly yourself.

123. On the subject of hair, dad's hair has been variously described in statements as curly, straight, and wavy and was brown, sandy and dirty blonde in colour. I'd love to see that identikit photo. A further example of hazy and inaccurate memories taken as fact.
124. IWO talked about dad humiliating twins and them having to be sent home. We never had twins in Dundas House and no one was ever sent home. Again, this is verifiable from the Academy's own records.
125. IWO said he was hosed down with cold showers and then plunged into a cold bath, but there were never any showers in Dundas House. He also talks about being put in boiling hot baths, but you were lucky to get a tepid bath in the house. His description of boiling hot showers and freezing cold baths is just ludicrous. The only "showers" in Dundas were the rubber shower heads that you stuck on the bath taps. As anyone with experience of these knows, it only takes a minute adjustment of one tap to change the temperature radically, or even someone in the next room flushing the toilet.

IOI

126. IOI was about three years older than me and always wore glasses. I have many pictures of him looking very happy that I have provided the Inquiry with. One of them is a formal picture of all the boarders with my brother, me, and my parents. IOI looks like he is about to burst out laughing.
127. IOI speaks at length in his statement about the issues he had with his own parents and his poor behaviour long before he came to the Academy. Another case of unloading issues he already had and blaming them on dad.

128. I also have pictures of [IOI] on a trip to the beach. Mum and dad would take us and the boarders out at the weekend of their own volition. There were always things to do. [IRZ] even said in his evidence that there were always things to do. The pictures I have given the Inquiry of trips do not show a lot of terrified people.
129. [INI] is also in this formal photograph and slept in the bed next to [IOI]. [INI] stated in his evidence to the Inquiry that he has no recollection of [IOI] being dragged out of bed to have 'hell rained on him' which is what [IOI] said in [] article. Nor does [IOI] mention that dad's study, where the alleged assault took place, was on the floor below his dorm.
130. [IOI] spoke about the Blair House trip and that someone was so scared to go to the toilet on the walk that they soiled themselves. We have photographs of that trip, and indeed that very walk and I have provided them to the Inquiry. Other teachers, or adults, were always on these trips too and often their spouses would come. Mum was always on these trips as well as she did all the cooking.
131. The Blair House trips were a major exercise as we had to take all the food and sleeping bags. They happened once a year in May. Someone said in their evidence they were only taken there to get tired out. The only people getting tired out were mum, dad, and the other staff present, as it was a major logistical exercise. There would have been much easier ways to "tire" the boys out at home.
132. [IOI] is in the photographs and does not exactly look traumatised from the walk and playing in the river. Everyone is looking remarkably content in the pictures. Sometimes people would get travel sick because it was a windy road for the last 15 miles of the journey to Blair House. I remember dad congratulating one boy who was sick as soon as he got off the bus and dad said, "well done for holding it in" or something similar. I also specifically remember us all singing the song, "Oh boy" on this trip with [IOI]. We just don't understand where all this is coming from.

133. [redacted] also told the Inquiry, and I quote "No one lasted in Dundas." I must emphasise that no boarder left Dundas House or the school, during mum and dad's tenure in the House. For the umpteenth time, here is yet another factual error which again can be evidenced in the Academy roll books.

[redacted]

134. [redacted] was a pioneer of what we now call After School Club. He was in the same year as my brother, but not a boarder. He would come back with the boarders from school and play and do homework, before his parents collected him to take him home in the evening. This was an arrangement that had been made to look after him and was most unusual at the time. I very much doubt there was a financial arrangement and I don't think I ever heard him or his family say thank you.
135. [redacted] was the one who said mum knitted a felt cloth for dad's clacken. For a start it is rubbish that dad would have a cover for the clacken and in any event, you don't knit felt. It is just poorly thought up rubbish. I did not even see my dad with a clacken in his hand, ever. Dad is someone who is notorious for never being able to find anything. It is a running joke in the family. He certainly didn't pack a clacken in his bag to take to school every day. Sometimes he did not even have a bag at all.
136. The clacken was just a part of Academy culture and boys traditionally used it for ball games, although not in my day. I have some pictures I have provided the Inquiry with, of children playing with clackens at the Prep school.
137. [redacted] was invited to go on the Blair House trip. If he had concerns about the people he was going away with, then presumably he would not have gone. It was a residential trip and he was not compelled to go as he was not a boarder.
138. [redacted] talks about a headmaster called Mr Bennett, but there was no headmaster called Bennett, it was Burnett. Again, he has not bothered to check that.

139. In his Inquiry statement he said he was hit by dad and talked about psychological torture, but ultimately, he can't remember. He was a day boy returning to his family at the end of every day after prep/homework time, yet he apparently said nothing.

Edinburgh Academy Staff

Rob Cowie

140. Rob Cowie was a teacher at the upper school and really knows nothing about dad. He taught at a completely different campus. He knew nothing about dad's background then and knows nothing about it now. He is uniquely unqualified to make any comment about dad. He said he didn't like dad's sense of humour. That is not a criminal offence.
141. Cowie goes on to say in his evidence that dad was undoubtedly over the top, but then states he never saw anything first hand. He says all these things with hindsight. If he had concerns why didn't he do anything at the time. Just to be crystal clear, he did not see anything himself.
142. He mentions in his evidence that a house tutor left Dundas House because he didn't like the way that the boys were treated by dad. The tutor left because Dundas House was closing down and he had to go somewhere.

Tony Cook

143. Tony Cook was also a teacher at the school and I am very disappointed in him as I got on well with him. He was my careers master and ran the RAF section of the Combined Cadet Force, which I enjoyed. I spoke to him recently at an Academy

Reunion in April 2022 and he asked about dad, as he knew he was unwell. I candidly told him that dad had Alzheimer's.

144. He says to the Inquiry that he never saw John Brownlee abuse a child. He worked at the upper school and would only have seen dad as a parent. Neither he nor Rob Cowie had direct links with dad on a daily basis. They taught a mile away at the Upper School campus at Henderson Row.
145. In all the media coverage, it is always a picture of Henderson Row that is used, with titles like, "Corridors of Fear". Well, maybe so, but dad didn't work there. I have never seen a picture published of where dad did work.
146. Rob Cowie and Tony Cook are very much still part of the Academical community, so they are maybe hearing things and putting two and two together and making five, I don't know. Tony Cook's wife made a comment about never letting any children board with the Brownlees if what **IBI** is saying in his statement is true. She is known to be very eccentric.

IBU

147. **IBU** said he never really got on with dad. That may be so but that was probably because dad didn't automatically say yes to things. **IBU** was in charge of sports throughout the whole school, but had very little to do with the Prep School. Dad's rugby coaching was invariably successful, so it is not like there was any issue with quality. We have various mementos in the house, presented to successful teams that dad coached. He never coached rugby alone and there was always another teacher present.
148. Rugby was mid-morning, twice a week. I remember being on other pitches at the time when dad was there coaching. **IJW** was the one that I remember taking rugby practice with dad at that time.

IDT

149. IDT was a housemaster in Scott House for the majority of the time we were in Dundas House. His son, , used to come and play in the common room with our boys. In his Inquiry statement he said he had no idea that dad was involved in abuse at all and cannot believe these allegations. He was one of the people closest to Dundas House and had no idea at all. If he did have concerns, he would surely not have allowed his son to come and play at our house.

ICM

150. ICM said no reports of abuse of children ever reached him. People are convincing themselves that things happened. The survivors do meet a lot and talk about things. It is all just words.

Norman Jack

151. Norman was my dad's colleague at the Prep School and he said that dad announced to the staff that Ian Wares had left because of abuse. I think it would be very odd for dad to do that and not the headmaster. Something as seismic as that would not be assigned to the deputy head, if dad even was deputy head at that time. Nor is it completely clear at that stage if Wares' departure was as the result of abuse. If it happened the way Norman said, I think that is very strange. It could just be confusion on his part.

James Burnett

152. James Burnett was one of several heads of the Prep School during dad's time there, and he taught both his sons. [REDACTED] was a complainer. Evidently, he did not say anything to [REDACTED] at the time as to how bad he thought things were with dad.
153. My dad taught a few teachers' children at the school. One of those was complainer, [REDACTED], who was the son of Howard Hazlett, the chaplain at the Upper School. Some of the parents of people dad taught were judges, law lords, and other high-ranking people in all sorts of fields. They would certainly not have been fobbed off with a lame excuse had they complained. Academy parents then, as I'm sure they still are, are not slow in coming forward. If there was anything going on, then the day boys were going home every day and their parents would have been in the school and speaking up if they heard something, but there was nothing.

[REDACTED]
154. [REDACTED] commented on a newspaper article about Edinburgh Academy online which appeared on [REDACTED]. I have provided the Inquiry with a copy.
155. [REDACTED] states "J. Brownlee joined the junior school as a supply P.E. teacher in 1964 reappearing as a class teacher...". This is wholly incorrect, dad did supply work at the Academy in 1958. He also states that "Brownlee married the junior school secretary prior to 1967 and had a son prior to becoming the Housemaster of Dundas House... Perhaps why the school claims to have no record of complaints in this period." This was news to mum. My brother and I were both there when my dad first took on the role as house master at Dundas House.
156. Whether [REDACTED] wrote this error strewn garbage himself or whoever provided him with the text is unclear, but it usefully illustrates the huge amount of misinformation that has been peddled out there. Mum was never the school secretary and has never been a secretary at any point in her life. She was a qualified teacher when she got married.

This is what we have been up against. Anything posted or printed is believed as fact. All the information contained in this post is factually incorrect and easily verifiable, with further details below.

Criminal Process

157. For a lot of Giles Moffat's evidence, there was no corroboration at all, yet the charges were still found. The sheriff stated in his summing up, "Corroboration is a requirement in Scots law. There must be evidence from more than one source." There was no corroboration at all for the supposed hose incident or garden shed allegations, yet these were not struck. We do not understand the inconsistency in applying the law.
158. The sheriff said in his findings that he accepted the evidence of the complainers over ours when there was a conflict. He also ignored Giles Moffat admitting he had discussed the case with other complainers the night before his own appearance in court. The sheriff found no collusion in a group that had been meeting for months and months.
159. The court seemed to be unaware of the split nature of the campuses at the Academy. They ignored the fact that dad worked in the Prep School and that campus had never been shown in the media. Most of the staff giving statements to the Inquiry did not work directly with dad and worked at another campus. None of these people saw him do anything untoward, not one.
160. One of the things that was said in evidence was that dad had applied to teach at a private sector school because he had a chip on his shoulder. I have a letter from Colonel Usher dated December 1958. He ran the physical education unit at Edinburgh University. He suggested that dad should help with the games programme at Edinburgh Academy, as the Academy had asked him to suggest someone. Dad was recommended to join the Academy to assist with the games programme, and then

when that came to an end, he went back to teach at Kirkcaldy Secondary School. I have provided the Inquiry with the original letter, which thankfully had been kept safely.

161. Dad received another letter then inviting him back to the Academy to be a class teacher. The letter I have provided is from the Rector at Edinburgh Academy, ICH dated 14th May 1964. It has been provided to the Inquiry too.
162. Dad did not apply to work at Edinburgh Academy because he had a grudge against private education. He was put forward, from the other worthy candidates to assist with the games programme, the Academy coming back to him five years later, offering him a full-time teaching post. They approached him and said they were expanding the Junior School and wished him to be part of it. To say he had a grudge against private education is all just part of creating a negative narrative, which as with so much else in this case has no relation to reality.
163. I saw dad interact daily with the boarders. I never saw him administer any corporal punishment. I never saw him hurting anyone in any way. The staff that felt compelled to come forward to the and/or criminal process admitted, without exception, that they never saw anything either.
164. Dad undoubtedly told pupils 'which way was up'. He was in control in his classroom and the boarding house. You were expected to abide by the rules which were clear and for everyone's mutual benefit. People like Nicky Campbell would not have liked being told what to do. It may be their egos, their own troubled family relationships or other personal or professional hangups, that are making them now say what they are saying about dad. I think COVID has been a time when everyone has reflected and maybe thought they aren't where they wanted to be in life, so it must be someone else's fault. Today's culture is always about blaming someone else. It is never self-done.

165. Here we are almost two years down the line from when we first learned about the allegations against dad. Despite the double whammy of a public inquiry and a court case, there is still no hard evidence that any of this took place. It is just words.
166. Edinburgh Academy has produced no physical evidence to the Inquiry, or the Examination of Facts to support any of the allegations. There were probably about two hundred people working directly with dad in his time at the school and not one went on to raise concerns. No one who moved on to a new school, a new post or retired, said anything, even after they left and had nothing to lose. It's simply not credible that no one said anything if there were concerns. I am sure dad would have made some unpopular, but necessary decisions later in his career as deputy head, which I'm sure did not suit some people, but no one has come forward in spite of all the coverage to say that they had any concerns or complaints at all.
167. Primary 6 pupils moved to Henderson Row for their Primary 7/Geits year, a campus the best part of a mile away from the prep campus at Arboretum Road. They had ample opportunity then to make complaints "safely away" from dad. They had a further seven years of schooling at Henderson Row in which to do so also, but again there is no evidence of any concerns raised. The current movers against dad are saying that the Court of Directors at the Academy knew about dad and did nothing. No one did anything about it because there was nothing to do anything about.
168. Eight to ten-year-old memories from decades ago are, as I hope I have illustrated, are far from reliable. We have already seen inconsistencies with things like the layout of Dundas House, which was completely wrong. The boarders were only there during term time and they went home for holidays. Unlike children in permanent care the boarders were always at home or with relatives for the holidays. It was not some permanent year-round residence in some inaccessible place. In addition, the day boys were going back home every day. Although Edinburgh Academy is currently being examined by the Inquiry as a boarding school, it was predominately a day school, even back then.

169. It has been suggested that dad's influence extended to other boarding houses on Henderson Row, but I don't see how. He was rarely at Henderson Row at all.
170. There is no appeal for an Examination of Facts. You could be a mass murderer and appeal, but not in an Examination of Facts. I think it is a fundamentally flawed process. There is no jury and it is a lottery with the sheriff you get on the day.
171. We would have got assistance from dad's teaching union who were happy to take the case on, but we were very close to the indictment being served and I don't think mum could have stood going through it all again with new legal representation. We elected to stay with our own lawyers, who did the best they could against the powers that be, as I will detail below.

Sheriff Ian Anderson

172. Part-time Sheriff Anderson presided over the Examination of Facts. Whether he was under pressure to deliver, I don't know, but he delivered his decision on the day our evidence finished and after rounding up another unrelated trial.
173. In my opinion he did not want to hear anything from us that went against what the complainers were saying. What we said was just disregarded. He stated that if there was a conflict of evidence, he sided with the complainers.
174. Family quarters in the other boarding houses were self-contained units which was not the case in Dundas. That is something that was not understood by the Sheriff as he said our family "could not speak" of what was allegedly going on in the house. We were literally cheek by jowl, so would have heard anything untoward going on.
175. Valerie Henderson, the day matron, also willingly testified in court to say she heard and saw nothing, but her evidence was also discounted by the Sheriff. She said the boys were all well looked after by all the adults involved with their care. All of our

witnesses were prepared to stand up and be counted. These included former pupils, one of whom was a retired headmaster, with extensive educational and pastoral knowledge.

176. The Academy's current chaplain, a role traditionally with a pastoral element to it, also gave evidence for the defence about his experiences of dad and I thought that was quite telling. I felt the Sheriff had already made up his mind long before any of the defence witnesses spoke.
177. The Sheriff shut me down in response to a question about IRZ [REDACTED] being "torn from his mother" when he arrived at the house. I replied that I did not see him being torn from his mother and I am sure his mother would have had something to say about that. I remember IRZ [REDACTED]'s arrival very well and it must have been a very traumatic time in his life, but that was not of mum or dad's doing. The fact of the matter is his mother would have had something to say about him being torn from her. It just wasn't as it happened. The hour of parting was a stressful time for the boarders and their parents.

Police Scotland

178. Shortly before the Examination of Facts, we had a visit from Police Scotland, very early in the morning. They said that our lawyers had requested they take a statement from us. I called our lawyer and asked why he wanted another statement from us when we had already given him one and he said he had not asked for this to take place.
179. Eventually I found out it was the Crown Office who sent the police, but the police were adamant it was our defence lawyers who sent them. They went to my mum's first and she sent them to my brother's where they repeated that they were acting on our lawyer's behalf. I was on the phone to my brother, having just spoken to our lawyer when they arrived and I told him that our lawyer had said they were not acting at his

request, so my brother told them that. They insisted they needed to take statements, to which we said we were not obliged to.

180. The police then called me and tried the same tactic and I said they were not acting on behalf of our lawyer and we are under no obligation to give them a statement. I told them we would be contacting our other witnesses to alert them that they were not under any obligation to provide a statement either.
181. The police then went to our other witnesses and said they were there to take statements, but they knew that John Brownlee's sons had told them not to give a statement. That was not true. There is a difference between telling them they were under no obligation to give a statement and not to give a statement. A lot of our witnesses were teachers and professionals who don't make mistakes of this nature. Our witnesses were sensible and intelligent people, able to make their own decisions. It was obvious that the police were not used to dealing with people who asked questions of them. Ultimately some of our witnesses were put off appearing because of this, which was a shame.
182. I felt like it was all about reducing the number of witnesses who were required to attend court for the Examination of Facts. This was just a few days before the trial started. I would have given the police the benefit of the doubt had they then not gone to our witnesses and said that they knew we had told them not to give a statement.
183. So there I am, a law-abiding citizen, brought up as one by mum and dad, to respect the police. Now I will never trust Police Scotland again or anything that they say. I don't know if it was just rogue officers, but perhaps being truthful is a wider issue in Police Scotland. I will never believe anything they say ever again.

Crown Office

184. The relief for the crown in their statement after the verdict was obvious. They had been under a lot of pressure from a high-profile group, spearheaded by Nicky Campbell, of course. Wares' extradition was not clear at this point, Dawson was dead and dad lived in Edinburgh, with Alzheimer's, and could not speak for himself. Dad was an easy target.
185. We were repeatedly sent citations to appear for the prosecution at the Examination of Facts and I had to read them several times to make sure I was not misreading it. I contacted our lawyer who said that should not be happening and they contacted the Crown Office. It did not stop the letters from arriving. Mum was up to "high doh" about it, as she is of the generation that if something official comes through the door, you respond to it. These citations were being delivered by uniformed police.
186. I wrote a letter of complaint to the Crown afterwards and received a response on 29th May 2024, which I have provided the Inquiry with. They said we were considered important to the prosecution case, but I think it would have been clear to even the dimmest person, that we would never be appearing for the prosecution. We received three citations in total. This was very upsetting for all of us. It was like they thought there can't be any defence in this.
187. The Crown also confirmed that it was they who instructed the police to get a statement from us a few days before the trial and not our lawyer. Also, that any complaints were a matter for Police Scotland and we should take it up with them. I have not done that yet. The Crown Office did apologise for sending the repeated citations and appreciated it could have been dealt with more sensitively. I could have taken my complaint to stage two, but feel what is the point, they are just going to cover their backs.
188. The relationship with the Edinburgh Academy Survivors Group and the Crown Office has been far too cosy. We often read things in the media before we actually knew about what was happening ourselves. The 10th July 2023 press release from Edinburgh Academy Survivors Group stating that a decision was to be made whether or not to prosecute dad was something we knew nothing about. We found out about

that and the indictment via the media before we received any official notification ourselves. That is not how it should be.

189. In their communication, the Crown also kept talking about “the survivors”. I thought they were complainers. It is little things like this that made us think they had already made up their mind.
190. The incontrovertible evidence prior to the Examination of Facts had to be changed a lot. It stated that Dundas House had a basement, a coal cellar and a furnace room. I was there eleven years and there was never a basement, nor a coal cellar, nor a furnace room. It is yet another example of lazy, abysmal and slovenly preparation. We had to tell our lawyers that all sorts of details were incorrect.
191. We were poorly served at every stage by the justice system. The Scottish legal system always holds itself up as being above the other systems in the world, but it’s clearly not the case. It has altered my trust in a lot of things that I took for granted before.
192. The complainers have played the system, clearly meeting up in person and online numerous times. There is bound to have been collusion, taking care to ensure that there is just enough discrepancy to avoid making it obvious.
193. I believe our lawyers did all they could. They managed to stop dad being arrested very shortly after we had found that an arrest was imminent.

Civil proceedings

194. I understand from Edinburgh Academy Survivors press releases that they are seeking action against the Court of Governors at Edinburgh Academy as there was common knowledge of abuse at the time. I hope I have shown here there was no evidence of abuse, let alone it being common knowledge.

Life after Edinburgh Academy

195. After dad retired in 1995, he continued to be an active member of the Edinburgh Academical community right up until around 2016, when what turned out to be his Alzheimer's started to kick in. During his teaching career and in retirement, he would be down at Raeburn Place in Stockbridge almost every Saturday, where the academical sporting grounds are, supporting the rugby and cricket. He was elected the secretary of the rugby club and then later the president of the cricket club. These are posts voted for and elected mainly by former pupils.
196. Mum and dad were invited to attend several former boarders' weddings. He played golf every week with a group called the Academical Ancients. This was a group of former pupils, retired members of staff and parents of pupils that he taught. Members past and present of the EA Court of Directors were also in this group. He was invited by these people to join this group. If anyone had concerns or issues with dad, they would hardly have invited him to join this group, nor would they have been slow to raise concerns.
197. Dad was a member of [REDACTED] which has a large number of EA connections within its membership, and as a family we were there quite frequently.. There was never any bad feeling exhibited by anyone towards dad or mum.
198. Mum and dad's wedding anniversary is Boxing Day. They celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary in December 2024. Boxing Day is one of the biggest social events at [REDACTED] and everyone is there with their families. Every year, a steady stream of people would come over and say hello to dad, lovely to see him etc. He knew who everybody was and was on first name terms with most of the parents, who all called him John. It was always former pupils and parents. From what we saw at [REDACTED] there was absolutely no ill will at all towards dad, but just a steady stream of welcome interruptions and people keen to say hello.

199. I was at a reunion of Academy pupils back in March 2022. It was a multi-year reunion, so the year above and the year below me were there. There was no inkling of anything then. These events are always 'well lubricated', so people are more inclined to say things, but nothing was said to me at all of a negative nature. There were some of our former boarders there and I spoke to one at great length. He asked after mum and dad. He was aware that dad was not in good health, it was common knowledge.
200. In December 2022 I was invited back to adjudicate the Division Music Competition at the Academy. I would never have agreed to that if I had thought there was any trouble brewing. This is a large event with lots of staff and parents present.

Reporting of Abuse

201. The first we knew of any allegation against dad was [REDACTED] 2023. On the BBC news App, it shows the front pages of all the newspapers and my wife saw an Academy boy on the front of [REDACTED]. Much later that day, and only after my wife had reminded me when we were in a supermarket, did I buy the paper. As I read it, it was clear that the boy was talking about Dundas House and dad, although he wasn't named, it tallied with the dates. [REDACTED] was the boy in the picture, although as he wasn't wearing glasses, it didn't look anything like him as we knew him. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] actually did us a huge favour, as without this article being published, the first we would have known about anything would have been dad getting arrested.

Impact

202. Dad was retired nearly thirty years and away from Dundas forty-one years and we heard absolutely nothing against him during that time. He does not know anything about the allegations against him because of his Alzheimer's. He would not be able to understand. It was reported in one of the newspapers that he "failed to attend court" for the first diet. He didn't fail to attend, he was not expected or required to attend.

203. Mum has been hit very hard by all of this. She had already had a couple of mini strokes prior to this and the strain on her has been immense. She should not have had to deal with this at her stage of life. To have the person that she has been married to for sixty years paraded like this in the public domain and people saying anything they want about him has been intolerable for her.
204. To hear people like IWO [REDACTED] speculating that maybe she was under the cosh from dad as well, hurts. She has known dad longer than anyone. IWO [REDACTED] knows nothing about their marriage.
205. Around the same time as all this was coming out it was clear that dad had to go into care. This is a seismic event in anyone's life, but for mum to have to make that decision alongside all of this was huge. To put your partner of almost sixty years into care would be enough for most people to have to cope with, but it has almost been eclipsed by this whole business.
206. In many ways, we were thankful that dad was in a care home, as we were able to discuss things at home without him being there when he would not have understood.
207. Mum has also seen her own reputation being tarnished by complainers saying she enjoyed their suffering. These boarders have no idea what was done for their benefit and wellbeing, in exactly the same way school pupils have little idea of the work undertaken by teachers outwith the classroom for their benefit. The complainers don't know about the letters to the rector from dad trying to make things better for them. It is the twenty-four seven care of other people's children and that is such a responsible job, even more so for young children. I come back to the point that not one boarder in their care left Dundas, or indeed the school, when mum and dad were running the house.
208. I have provided the Inquiry with a photograph of two brothers who boarded with us. Their father held a very senior position within the armed forces in Northern Ireland at

the height of the Troubles. It certainly crossed dad's mind that it was not inconceivable that they could be targeted by paramilitary groups. I don't think in 'loco parentis' gets more responsible than that.

209. This has all been inordinately hard. We hoped after the Examination of Facts there would be closure but there is not. We feel more anger and frustration about the whole business now, than we did when it all first came out, hence the need for our statements. There is still no concrete or hard evidence that any of these alleged acts took place, nearly two years down the line.

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210. Dad was not offered any anonymity like other people were. Dawson and Wares were also mentioned and not given anonymity. Dad was the only other one. We have written to the Inquiry to ask why this was so and received a very garbled response. The letter said something about, 'what's in a name' and contradicted itself. It did not seem to make much sense to us. It was basically saying that dad's name was in the media anyway.
211. I think because there was the potential of legal proceedings against dad, all this prejudicial coverage did not help. There are people who believe everything that they read in the papers.
212. The prejudicial media coverage that this caused meant that dad was never going to get a fair trial. The other two alleged abusers are accused of sexual abuse and dad is not. If nothing else comes out of this inquiry for dad, it is really key to us, that it is understood that dad was never accused of sexual abuse.
213. In one of the Edinburgh Survivors Group press releases, dated July 10th 2023, they said that they had been in contact with the Inquiry and they met and raised their concerns and had been reassured by the response. It was said that the Inquiry had

agreed to make relevant “adjustments to their procedures”. I asked the Inquiry exactly what adjustments were made, and they have since replied saying no adjustments to procedures were made. It would therefore appear that the survivor’s spokesman writes just as much untruthful garbage as he speaks.

214. The communication sent from the Inquiry is very much from a victim’s point of view. It talks about survivors but there is another side to it all. And I think it is important that this is recognised more formally by the inquiry process in their communications.

Hopes for the Inquiry

215. We just want the public to know there is another side to all of this that we have not been able to present up till now. We had hoped that the Examination of Facts was our opportunity to do that, but unfortunately it wasn’t. We also hoped that after the Examination of Facts’ decision it would all go away, but it has not. A recent newspaper article about forthcoming trials of other former Edinburgh Academy staff members had so little to report, they resorted to trotting out details of dad’s trial instead.
216. What we want from the Inquiry is to get our side out in the public domain. We understand that the Inquiry has important things to find out, but it is dealing with real people on both sides and dad, who was unable to speak for himself, should have received protection too.

Other information

217. With the decline in dad’s Alzheimer’s, he was deemed unfit to give evidence himself to this Inquiry or the Examination of Facts. His short time memory has almost disappeared, although his very early memories are still intact. The assessor who was sent by the crown recognised this very quickly. His short time memory has almost disappeared, although typically for the condition his childhood memories are intact.

218. There is undoubtedly a financial motivation here from the complainers. I very much doubt they would be willing to forego any financial compensation and just be satisfied with the sheriff's ruling. There was not a whisper of any complaints until compensation was mentioned.
219. The Academy has a responsibility here as well. They are understandably keen to distance themselves from the past but saying things before the Examination of Facts such as, "We are appalled that these things happened", before there was even due process, for all that is worth, it was not at all helpful. As it is, I believe that the Academy should consider very carefully before it parts with a single penny in compensation on dad's behalf. The whole tenet of the accusers case is that the school knew things were going on but did nothing. That has still not been proved. Dad was incredibly proud of the Academy and immensely protective of the prep school.
220. All of the supporting documents and photographs I have mentioned in my statement and provided to the Inquiry will also be sent to Edinburgh Academy.
221. If the Academy had concerns about dad, they would not have made him a housemaster. Nor would they have increased the number of boarders in Dundas House. Nor would they have asked mum and dad to stay for an eleventh year, when it was normally only ten years in a boarding house. Nor would they have promoted dad to deputy head. If dad had acted in the way that people have said he did, he would have been risking a great job, at a great school, that he didn't even apply to work at. He would have been jeopardising the education of his own sons, which at that time was free and when he was in Dundas House, he would have literally been jeopardising the roof over his head.
222. 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.....06 June 2025.....