

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Howard James HASLETT

Support person present: No

1. My name is Howard James Haslett. My surname is pronounced Hazlett. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1944. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I have had correspondence with Nicky Campbell over the past few years and I have provided those emails to the Inquiry. I taught Nicky at Edinburgh Academy and liked him. My wife and I got really hooked on Long Lost Family, and I got a hold of his email in November 2021 to thank him for it. I also picked up his book at a charity shop and several things came up that intrigued me. We had some similarities in life, and I shared all of that with him and got a lovely email back.
3. When the news of his abuse broke on 27th July 2022, I wrote to him again about how horrified I was. My job at the time was to be there for people in trouble and I heard not a thing about it. Nicky got back to me and said he didn't even tell his parents at the time, so why would he have told any of the school staff.
4. I offered my help and Nicky put me in touch with Jenny Pearson, Hamish Dawson's daughter, who's wedding I conducted, and two other survivors. I had long, long conversations with them all. This was all in the past year. Nicky got back to me afterwards and thanked me, saying everyone had appreciated it. I then heard nothing for a while.

5. IKA [REDACTED] was one of the survivors that I spoke with. He got in touch with me again and said it was all starting to heat up. I also saw on the internet that another survivor had said there was nobody to talk to at the academy. I emailed Nicky and told him I was quite saddened to hear that. At the beginning of each new term, I told everyone if there was ever any trouble to give me a shout. That would not have been an address to the whole school, it would have been to individual classes.
6. I believe Nicky then either shared our correspondence on social media or with the Inquiry without permission because I got a couple of vile emails from survivors. Had I known that I was corresponding with all survivors I may have written a bit differently.
7. They accused me of only being interested in my reputation, which was furthest from the truth. I took this very sorely. This term cess pit was being used by a guy named [REDACTED], and to me that was not how I saw it at the time. There were plenty of good people on the staff and I had some superb colleagues. To me they would have been open to approach and I took a bit of exception to this idea that there was nobody to speak to.
8. The emails had all sorts of accusations stating there were multiple testimonies that I would have known about abuse, which is certainly not the truth. I can honestly say that not a single person ever came to me with any complaint about physical or sexual abuse.
9. I did send another very quick email to Nicky 22nd August 2023 asking if his emails had been hacked or if he was sharing our correspondence with the rest of the world. I did not get a response back. I think I will wait until the dust has settled now.

Qualifications and Employment History

10. I was born in Belfast and went to the Harding Memorial Primary School. I then got a scholarship to the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, which was a fee-paying school. It was not a boarding school and I think my parents paid a tenner a term. I then

went to Trinity College in Dublin and did a double honours degree in French and English. After I graduated from Trinity, I went to Edinburgh New College in 1966 and did two years of a bachelors in divinity. I was refereeing rugby at the time and bumped into IBU [REDACTED], who was a P.E. teacher at Edinburgh Academy. IBU [REDACTED] told me there was a position going for one year. He said I would have to live in the boarding facilities, but I said I was broke and that would be fine. That conversation was on the Thursday, and I had the job by the Friday.

Employment with Edinburgh Academy

Posting

11. I had a meeting with ICH [REDACTED] who was the rector of Edinburgh Academy and then started in September 1968. I was teaching French and English. I was also house tutor at Jeffrey House and taught a little Latin. I had references from Bill Shaw at New College who was an academic and Hugh Anderson who was a professor in the New Testament. I believe they were contacted about my references as I think Bill Shaw did mention it afterwards. There was no probationary period that I was aware of. Some of the older members of staff at that time were very good to me, Hamish Dawson being one. If I had any difficulties in the early days, I would have gone to him.
12. After a year at the academy ICH [REDACTED] said to me, he had always wanted to appoint a chaplain, so would I like to go off and complete the rest of my divinity education whilst saying on at the boarding facilities and helping out with rugby. I thought that was great and said yes. I still lived in Jeffery House with KKB [REDACTED] as the house master and a lovely couple of matrons, Miss Sutherland and Audrey Todd. The children in that house were aged fourteen to eighteen.
13. To practice as chaplain, I had to become a Minister of the Church of Scotland. I had to jump through hoops and do all sorts of things for that. I did a year at Moray House in 1971 after I finished my bachelors in divinity and then two years as an assistant minister at St Giles' Cathedral. In 1973 I was back full time at Edinburgh Academy as chaplain and still teaching English and French. When I look back on it, I was allowed

only four free periods to work on being chaplain and the workload just increased and increased. It was a crazy time.

14. By now, I was married with three children and had moved into a small house in the prep school. I was getting desperate as house prices had gone through the roof, so I started to look around for jobs that might offer a bigger house. ICH approached me and said he knew I was looking for other jobs. He asked me not to as the academy was looking to purchase Donaldson School for the Deaf and there was a house on the grounds that might suit us. That was in the summer of 197█, and we moved into the house at Donaldsons in the September.
15. As soon as we moved ICH retired and Lawrence Ellis was appointed. There was quite a change then. To be quite honest with you the leadership was dreadful. The atmosphere certainly was different when Lawrence arrived. One of my colleagues said after a few months Lawrence Ellis had undone all of the good that ICH had done.

My Roles

16. As house tutor, I would supervise prep time and do lights out. That was fairly standard. I was expected to be in four nights of the week to do this. I got on well with KKB. He was one of the older colleagues that helped me when I first started.
17. Later, as chaplain, organising the morning prayers meant that I chose the readings and hymns. That took two hours to organise this for each week on top of everything else. We would also have visiting preachers throughout the year, and I would have to reciprocate that by doing the same for them.
18. My weekends were taken up with rugby and I rarely saw my family. My two sons were at the academy and frequently I would only see them on the yard at the school. My daughter went to St George's School for girls.

19. I was frustrated at the academy as I felt there was nothing I did totally to my satisfaction. There were times when I did not feel properly prepared for my teaching and sermon preparation was often rushed and unsatisfactory. I did have the opportunity to move following a series of Thoughts for the Day that I did on radio. In the late seventies I was offered a job by the BBC. I felt tied with our house at the academy and our children at the school and did not accept it.

Rectors

20. ICH [REDACTED] was a disciplinarian. In his time there was a bit of a waiting list for the school. He was not an approachable man. He was a bachelor, held a military cross and was an English rugby trialist. You would get notes left in your class saying a boy needed a haircut. It was the time when long hair was coming in but not at the academy. I don't think anybody dared not to get a haircut if he said.
21. Lawrence Ellis was an appalling rector. On one occasion a house master, Drummond Boyce, came to see me and said a French boy in his house was not happy and things were not wonderful at home. He said Lawrence was going to take him out of the school and I said that wasn't right and went to see him. I told him the boy had only been at the school a short time and why was he sending him away. He just glazed over and said the board of directors wanted him to resign. He hadn't been at the school that long either.
22. I had a good friend on the board of directors, and I spoke with him about the French boy. I also spoke with a senior colleague, IDT [REDACTED], who supposedly hit Nicky Campbell. He more or less agreed with me about the French boy and it I think it ended up that he did stay.
23. Lawrence also stayed but I think after that he was manipulated by the directors as every now and then he would say the directors want this and that. I don't think his period was a particularly happy one. Anytime you went to him with a problem he would always tell you about what they did at his previous school in England, Marlborough. I

think he left the academy in the early nineties. INU [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with John Light [REDACTED].

24. A few eyebrows were raised about John Light. He was just generally a nasty piece of work. I heard this at social dinners. There was a dinner party culture in Edinburgh, and it was such a small society. I don't know of any specific complaints from parents I just heard about the odd email asking when we would get rid of him. There was the attitude that as parents were paying for the school, they wanted to see results.
25. I think the job of rector was almost an impossible one as you had to satisfy the parents, the directors, the pupils, the staff and the general public. Those five are probably incompatible and it always felt like the staff were the last ones to be considered.

Structure

26. When I was first appointed as house tutor at Jeffrey House, KKB [REDACTED] would have been my house master and line manager in that role. [REDACTED] Chris Head was head of modern languages and Wilfred Hook was head of modern English. As chaplain I suppose the rector would have been overseeing me. There were no reviews of my performance from what I can remember. I might have had the odd chat with one of them.

The board of directors were almost all former boys to the school, and in my view knew absolutely nothing about education except that they had been to the school themselves. They were largely financiers concerned only with that.

Houses

27. There were initially four boarding houses, but Dundas House later became the Polish Embassy. Hamish Dawson was house master for Dundas House when I was a house tutor in Jeffrey House. He lived there with his family. Jenny told me she hated it there as every time she had to go to the toilet, the boys would be there sniggering. She loathed that.

28. MacKenzie and Dundas were for junior pupils and Scott and Jeffrey were for seniors. The houses were secure with a big front door and a door onto the playing fields. They had annexes built on just before I arrived, and the house master's family lived there with their own front door. There were occasionally visiting house tutors, but I can't ever remember that happening when I was in Jeffrey House. I don't think I was ever ill and needed someone to replace me. Other members of staff wouldn't have had reason to go to the other boarding houses. The houses were across from the playing fields and maybe if someone had an injury you might have had reason to bring them back to their house, but you would not go to other houses routinely.
29. I might have popped back to see the matron, Audrey Todd after I left Jeffrey House, but I would not have gone back there professionally. My family home was in the old Donaldson School for the deaf on Henderson Row and the boarding houses were on Kinnear Road. I was quite separate from the boarding department and prep school.

Staff

30. IBU [REDACTED] was a bit of a rough diamond, and a lot of people didn't like him, one of my sons in particular. My son was doing athletics and wasn't getting very far so wanted to revert to cricket. He asked IBU [REDACTED] who said he was no use to him anyway. This would have been a typical response. Pastorally he was good as he would often ask me to have a word with boys that he felt weren't doing too well. I think P.E. and art teachers saw pupils on a more informal basis and picked up hints that something may be wrong more than you would if you were sitting in a formal classroom setting.
31. IBU [REDACTED] would pick up on things for instances if a pupil's clothes weren't clean or they looked uncared for. I remember one time he and I went to a boy's house as he wasn't attending school and he was home on his own. The house was an absolute shit hole. We just asked him why he wasn't coming to school and why he wasn't happy. It was more of a gesture really to show care as opposed to telling him he must come to school. I think his name was [REDACTED] and he was about fifteen years old. He eventually went off and joined the navy.

32. I had quite a few laughs with Hamish Dawson. The timetable always had me, Hamish Dawson, IFP [REDACTED] and IDR [REDACTED] free the first period of the first day of term. We would all go for coffee and a chat. I would have considered Hamish a pal of mine. We had a pastoral relationship and he confided in me. One day in the photocopying room Hamish produced a photograph of a prostitute he had been having an affair with. He asked me to tear it up and say a prayer. I am happy to tell you about this as he is dead now and I have told his daughter, Jenny. This was sometime in the eighties.
33. I remember I went to see Hamish in hospital before he left the academy, and he was very non-committal about his illness. Next thing I knew he was away. I then heard he was playing Santa Clause down in Cheltenham somewhere. I was never in his classrooms but there was never the slightest suspicion that anything was going on.

Training

34. I did not have any official training from the academy. They wouldn't have known how to do that. That didn't happen at that time. No one ever said to me you ought to do this or why don't you do that. There was none of that. It was just assumed you knew what you were doing, and you got on with it.
35. I gave a bit of guidance to the R.E. teachers. I certainly didn't sit at the back of the class when they were teaching, it was more informal. It was really just advice when asked. I was never involved with any appraisals or anything like that.
36. I remember this guy called Trotman who was deputy head for a few years. He had some bright idea to get together and draw pictures. It was some sort of staff afternoon. I don't know what you would have called it, but we had these funny wee tests. I remember sitting thinking it was a bit of a joke and a waste of time. This was in the [REDACTED] 1990s just before INU [REDACTED] came. I remember someone saying if Trotter hadn't left, he would have become rector.

37. I also went to a conference once and met with other R.E. teachers. I remember sharing our frustrations about the role. I can't remember where it was and if it was training as such.

Policy and Planning

38. I did not really feel like I was ever considered when it came to the policies of the school, but I would always have interfered if I felt someone was being badly treated. There was a couple of times I went to the rector when I felt other members of staff were being unfairly treated.
39. I wasn't involved in any written policies for the school. Somewhere in the prospective it was stated that I was available if needed but I don't remember anything specific. I don't remember the term child protection ever being used or any discussions around it.
40. I don't remember any policies around discipline. I remember when I arrived at the school opening a drawer and seeing the tawse there. I asked someone what it was and when I realised it was for discipline, I shut the drawer and said that's not for me. It was legal back then and I didn't like the idea of it personally, but I never really saw an issue with it. I knew some members of staff might have used it, but I never actually would have seen it as I wouldn't have been in their classrooms. I was a younger member of staff then and just assumed the more senior members knew what they were doing.
41. I then remember after several years of being at the school we were told not to use the tawse anymore and some parents were unhappy about it as they liked the discipline. I think word just got around and in the late seventies it became illegal nationally.
42. I did not have any involvement in the strategic planning for the school. That was not within my remit and child abuse would not have been in any planning as far as I was aware. The word abuse wasn't really a word that was used. Not one person spoke with me about sexual abuse or came to me about it. It never ever came up with staff.

IFR [REDACTED] was the house tutor for three years in MacKenzie house with Hamish Dawson and I have since spoken with him. He never ever had the slightest suspicion about anything.

Recruitment

43. Occasionally I may have been asked to have a word with someone who was being interviewed for a job at the school. Largely, because I lived on the premises they would say, go and have a word with the Chaplain. It was informal and not structured. I wasn't sitting on a panel or anything like that. John Meadows was one of those people. I had forgotten, but I have seen him recently and he reminded me. I would have then been asked for my opinion on him afterwards, again informally. I don't recall ever saying anyone was not suitable and I would not have known if references were requested.

Pastoral care

44. My home was my office. I don't remember the exact wording I would have used when making myself available, but I would have made it clear that my door was always open. There was a front door to my house and also a backdoor with a corridor which was very private. It would have been known when I was home, and boys did come to speak with me. They would have just taken a chance on breaks or caught me after class, and I would give them my time. I wouldn't say it was a weekly occurrence. I taught R.E. from my home and when they all left, inevitably one would stay back. There was a private room we could use.
45. I loathed the word counselling. I was there as a listening ear if any kid wanted to talk. I was a reassurance and if any action needed to be taken, I would have to gauge what that might be at the time. Every kid would also have a class master. There were four in each year. Most of those class masters were approachable. George Harris was a delightful man and Henry Marsh who sadly has dementia now, is a brilliant intellect. Rob Cowie was a very good chemistry teacher and there was Tony Cook [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and his son who is now a teacher too. I think they were all appointed because they were approachable, but I did not really know of any pupils

approaching them. I think once or twice, George Harris might have said so and so has had a word with me, but it wouldn't have gone much further than that.

46. If I had to speak with a kid, it would be more of a jovial exchange, giving a bit of encouragement. I would maybe speak with them about rugby or just have a bit of a chat rather than give them the third degree. Bullying was the main thing boys would come to me about or falling out with their girlfriends. Also, for family bereavements. I remember a dad calling me once because his son was upset. Another boy's mum had died. His name was [REDACTED]. He came and spoke with me at the time, and I later did his wedding.
47. A lot of pupils actually came with their celebrations, and it was the other way around. That sort of conversation was great. When this comment came up recently about there being no one to talk to at the school I just thought that is not right. Pupils chose not to talk. There was such good expertise available that wasn't used.
48. Nicky Campbell has said to me that there was this great culture of secrecy, and you did not even tell your own pals. They just did not tell teachers, as we were on the other side of the fence. I found this quite hard to hear but I do understand. [REDACTED], another survivor I have spoken with, said it took him twenty-four years to even tell his parents.

Bullying

49. There were pupils who came to speak to me about bullying. One actually left and went to Fettes. I practiced a system called the Rogerian system. It is what the Samaritans use. You don't give advice, even when you can see a solution there. You ask questions and hope that the person can see a solution themselves. That was really the way that I worked. I would ask questions and try to help the person to turn it around themselves.
50. I would have spoken to the pupils involved in any bullying. I think I had to do this maybe two or three times a year in my twenty-five-year career. I would talk to the kid being

bullied and if they gave me a name, I would approach the other laddie. I always felt you couldn't win as you never knew if intervening might make it worse.

51. I never recorded anything. To me I was protecting confidentiality all the time. I think there was one occasion when I did say to Lawrence Ellis that I was not happy about a situation. It might have been the lad that ended up leaving and going to Fettes. In that particular case I think I got the two bullies in and asked them if they were proud of what was happening. When I spoke with Lawrence, I just got another lecture about Marlborough.
52. Another incident was when IKA's dad got in touch with me because IKA was not happy. It was the time of punk rock and his dad felt like he was falling off the rails. He had grown his hair and was wearing tartan trousers. I think I got IKA in and had a yarn with him. Nothing came out about abuse. I don't really remember our conversation, but I do remember he mentioned not a thing about abuse.
53. There was someone doing a thesis on bullying, and he came and gave us a lecture. I remember not being terribly impressed by him. I cannot recall what action was to be taken if bullying was disclosed. I cannot picture Lawrence Ellis giving any guidance about it at all at any staff meetings. I can't honestly remember any particular discussions or guidance given.

Culture

54. With ICH there was a certain amount of fear. I remember someone in a podcast interview referring to him as not having any empathy at all. That was the culture with him as rector. You didn't expect anything from him. If you wanted to get on with him, you would climb mountains. If you climbed Munros you would be one of ICH's boys.
55. Lawrence Ellis was self-obsessed and under the thumb of the directors. If you went to him with anything you always got a story about Marlborough. There was a teacher, David Bishop with whom I ran a cross country practice. We were in Inverleith Park, and I heard a shout. David was lying on the ground, and I ran over to him and did

mouth to mouth. He died in my arms, and I had to go and tell his wife. Not long after that a good friend of mine was killed in a car crash, and another died of cancer. I lost three people in the space of a few weeks and conducted each of their funerals. Lawrence Ellis said not a word to me, nothing. That was a difficult time for me.

56. INU was only at the academy for a short period of time but what he did promote was a culture of praise, which was a big plus. I don't think in my whole time working with ICH and Lawrence Ellis did I receive one word of encouragement or praise. You were expected to do your duty and get on with it.

57. I don't think the day pupils and boarders were treated any differently. It might have been there, but I didn't see it, even with my pupils but I could be wrong.

58. It is very hard to say if the culture changed over my time at the school. It would be very subjective. It was my aim to be there for anyone who needed it and that is why I am so upset now about what has transpired. I hope at least I gave praise where praise was due.

Religious instruction

59. It was always part of my preaching that I tried to relate anything biblical to daily life. I would always hope that anything I said about the holy scriptures was relative to everyone's life and the readings would reflect that. Prayers were every morning, but Wednesdays were hymn practice. I remember when Princess Di passed, and I spoke that morning. A couple of members of staff wrote me letters thanking me for that.

Prefects

60. There would always have been a good rugby player amongst the prefects. They were called 'ephors' back then. There were five senior 'ephors' and I don't know how many junior 'ephors'. I never really had much to do with them. They would have done readings and prayers, so I did have some contact with them, but I did not think much about the selection process. There were some good guys selected as prefects.

Discipline

61. It used to be that the prefects were allowed to beat, but ICH [REDACTED] stopped that before I started at the academy. I just remember it being referred to by him as he found it barbaric. I think prefects could still give lines. My son was one, but I don't remember him exercising any authority. I don't recall any rules or regulations around the discipline by prefects.
62. I don't remember ever receiving a piece of paper that said these are the circumstances in which you may beat a boy, there was nothing like that. I certainly don't remember anything at all.
63. I didn't need to discipline as I just raised my voice. I had to speak severely to one or two pupils, and I might have given the odd detention for poor work. Detention would be on a Saturday morning.
64. Pupils could be abusive to teachers too, there were quite a few who were arrogant. I remember one time I had been up all night for some pastoral reason, and I hadn't got some English essays marked. Some kid asked me where the essays were as I was being paid to mark them. There was a fair bit of that.
65. One time they appointed the deputy head, Colin Evans, as the person you would send children to for discipline. I can't remember what he did to discipline them, but I did send a pupil to him once when I found him smoking. Mr Evans let him off, so after that I did my own disciplining. I didn't have to exercise discipline often, and I did not keep a record of it.
66. I remember one laddie being chucked out of the school possibly because of drugs. It was hearsay and that is the only thing I can think of where someone was expelled.

Inspections

67. Initially R.E. was not inspected but they did start to a few years before I left. English was inspected but I never got any feedback or written reports. The inspectors just sat at the back of the class. I would not have been involved in any inspections of the boarding houses and if there had been any I think it would have been informal.

Records

68. We wrote reports on each kid at the end of every term. For the younger classes there was less room to write as there were more classes but for A levels you had more space.
69. There may have been files kept in the offices, but I was not aware of that. I did know they kept files in the attic above where I lived but the secretaries dealt with that. There must have been a lot of archives up there. I don't know if it was school reports or inspection reports. I am sure there was a record of me somewhere, but I was never shown it.
70. I would have made notes if I had time on what I was going to teach but you so often were flying by the seat of your pants. I may have kept files of essays boys had written.

Complaints

71. There was no formal complaint procedure, but people would have known to go to the rector. The class master was also there, and I advertised myself as a listening ear. I don't know if complaints were recorded.
72. If there was a particular complaint made about me, I would have been told about it. There was one Friday I got up at 5:00 a.m. to write my morning prayers. I did my morning registration, then prayers. I taught the first three periods, then someone came to see me during the break. I taught the next few periods, then we had the Friday rugby team talk and I didn't have time for lunch. I then taught the last three periods and went

back home to change, as I was conducting a funeral across the city. I looked into the family home afterwards and was offered a dram. I took it out of courtesy, then went home to change for the parent's night, which finished about 10:00 p.m.

73. About a week later John Light said he had a letter from a parent complaining I smelt of alcohol and used foul language at the parents evening. That was the only time a parent complained about me that I am aware of. I don't know if he wrote back to the parent.
74. In response to the parent who complained about Iain Wares to ICH [REDACTED], and ICH [REDACTED] allegedly replied that the child had an over fertile imagination, it does not surprise me. It was all about reputation for him. I suppose it depends on the complaint. If it was about some sort of sexual abuse, I would have been surprised if ICH [REDACTED] had not taken action. I do not know the circumstances and maybe he was under all sorts of other pressures. I only knew Iain Wares when he was a visiting house tutor. I just thought he was an unassuming guy and was not aware of any complaints about him.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

75. I don't think John Light liked me. He was rector INU [REDACTED] and he arrived in 1995. I did not take to him either, he seemed a little bit pompous. I was asked by the directors to set up a foundation, fundraising and building on contacts for the school but also staying on as chaplain. I slogged away at that and at the same time organised some rugby tours that were highly successful. I organised dinners that raised about twenty thousand pounds.
76. In 1999 the day before term started John Light put a letter through my door and asked me to call in to see him. When I went to his office, he handed me a letter saying I was being made redundant. I just couldn't believe it, there was no warning. I asked him about the value they put on the successful rugby tours and fundraising dinners, and he responded by saying they did not ask me to do that. I mentioned the many hours of pastoral conversations and he said these were all anecdotal.

77. I hadn't been very well and had been seeing a consultant. I had to go private as there was a long wait on the NHS and when I saw him, he said if I had waited, I could have died. My blood pressure was through the roof, and he said I was doing too much. He asked if he could write to the rector advising that my intolerable workload should be greatly reduced. I agreed to this. Four weeks passed and I was made redundant. Now I think there was maybe a legal claim there. Two of my children were doing their final exams, it was absolutely awful.
78. I don't think I can exaggerate the hurt and the disappointment of just all of a sudden being told that my career of twenty-five years had come to an end. That was very, very sore. I have provided the Inquiry with copies of letters relating to my redundancy.
79. Twenty-five years later I had a conversation with one of the survivors. He said he had been talking to a former member of the management committee of the academy. My name had come up in conversation. She said that I was appallingly treated. They had dreamt up a redundancy plan so that the school could repossess my residence.
80. In the end it turned out to be the happiest time of my life as we moved to East Linton, and I was a minister there for ten years. I could have been dead if we stayed at the school, but I ended up in a lovely manse and we couldn't have been happier. I retired in 2010 and moved to Haddington where I now live.

Awareness of abuse

81. I had no knowledge at all of any abuse at Edinburgh Academy. Abuse was a subject that was never raised until now. There was no definition of abuse, and the word just wasn't used at all. It was just assumed that we were all good people, and we would get on with our jobs. We never would have thought anything like that could have happened. I always thought that the house masters were very competent people, albeit overworked. Abuse just didn't arise, and child protection was not even a phrase we used. There was just a general understanding that you did your job and were professional.

82. The boarding department and prep school were separate entities. I don't think there was that much time to share information and there was no formal system in place for that. I am sure if someone had come to me about abuse, I would have gone straight to the rector. I can honestly say not a single boy spoke with me about abuse during my time at the academy. Nothing physical and certainly not the slightest thing about anything sexual. None of the colleagues that I am in touch with now had any incline whatsoever either.
83. If anyone did approach me with an incident of abuse, there was no guidance, and nothing written down about how to manage this. It was just assumed it wouldn't happen.
84. My sleep has been disturbed considerably by all of this. There seems to have been some sort of idea flying around that I did know something, but I just have to be perfectly clear here that I knew nothing. It must have gone on undetected, and nobody knew because of the code of silence.
85. My two sons were at the academy and never said anything at all about sexual abuse or corporal punishment to me. My son [REDACTED] did tell me a few weeks ago that he had been asked to appear as a witness for an incident in John Brownlee's class. He mentioned a few details and I asked him why he didn't tell me at the time. He said he thought it was just the norm and what happened at school. I don't think Brownlee would have done anything to any of my boys because I was one of the staff. If [REDACTED] had told me about anything at the time, I would have gone to the rector.
86. I did go to James Burnet once when a female teacher clipped [REDACTED] on the ear. I can't remember her name and I don't know what happened in the end.
87. I don't know what I would have done if [REDACTED] had told me about someone else being abused. It would have depended on the tone he told me, and the level of discipline used. It did not happen in any event.

88. I have now heard other stories about John Brownlee bringing lids of desks down on heads and I think IFP [REDACTED] might have been a bit rough too. I think maybe [REDACTED] told me about this. I have now heard a large number of staff have been accused but I could not have thought of that at the time. I am pretty sure it would have been mentioned in the staff room if anyone had any concerns.
89. My R.E. class involved a lot of discussion and some classes it was like trying to get water out of a stone. It has occurred to me now, that could it have been that some of those boys had been abused and was that the reason they did not cooperate. Also looking around at prayers in the morning there were some boys sitting with their mouths shut and now the thought occurs to me, could it have been unhappiness? I just thought at the time it was cool not to participate. This really has all affected my sleep.

Reporting to police/criminal proceedings

90. I have given a statement to the police where I have stated similar to what I am telling you now. That was a few weeks ago and they were from Linlithgow. [REDACTED] was contacted first and he sent me the email he had received with a contact name and email address. I contacted them and said I would be perfectly happy to talk to them. They explained the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry was separate and I said I was happy for them to pass my details on to you. They were more interested in charging people and any evidence I could provide to help with that.
91. I showed them the letters I received from survivors stating I was only concerned with my own reputation, and I asked if I should respond. They advised me not to as it would only prolong the conversation and I did not really want that. All it proves to me is that those who have been abused become abusers and I did wonder if there might be a case for harassment. One letter was particularly appalling, and I have provided this to the Inquiry. The police said if it were to happen again to contact them.

92. I understand an ex-pupil called Iain Glen came forward with allegations of abuse in 2001, but I had left the academy after that. I taught him and he played rugby. I don't know how serious the allegations were or what he said so I can't comment on how the school dealt with that.

Alleged Abusers

Bill Bain

93. I knew Bill Bain as he played rugby at Edinburgh Accies and taught science. I might have had a pint with him after a match, but I didn't consider him a friend. I found him a pleasant enough guy. I have had no contact with him since he left the academy, and it was only recently someone told me he had been to prison. He just left to go to Robert Gordon, and I had no concerns about him at all. If he had left in the middle of a term, I would not have remarked on it, but I can't remember when he left. He was in a different department to me. I did not hear about his conviction in 2016 and I cannot therefore comment on the school's response to it.

John Brownlee

94. John Brownlee was involved in the prep at Dundas House, and I would have seen him on occasion for rugby matches as he coached rugby. He was not a pal of mine as he was that bit older and not particularly social. He taught both my sons and I knew who he was as a colleague, but I wasn't out having pints with him, and I wouldn't have seen him around children. I can't remember him ever being a topic of conversation, but I think he may have been described as strict.

Hamish Dawson

95. I had no questions at all around Hamish Dawson's conduct. He was a history teacher and house master. He was good fun and friendly, we often shared a joke. He was a jovial guy in the staff room. When I spoke with his daughter recently, I was shocked

as she has had a horrendous life. I did not know any of that at all. I would have thought of him as a friend, but I obviously did not know him well. I think his wife was a narcissist and it now sounds like it was a terrible family. I just could not believe that this was the man I knew, it really did depress me.

96. I had never been in Hamish's classroom and never saw him discipline children. I have heard of his instruments of correction now, but I don't remember them at the time. I do remember he had a large comb but nothing concerning. I thought he was maybe just a little bit eccentric. My pal George Harris was the head of history and spoke positively of him too, so if he hoodwinked me, I wasn't the only one.

Iain Wares

97. Iain Wares was in the prep school, and I would have only seen him at mealtimes. I think he was a visiting house tutor as well. I remember very little of him. I thought of him as not a terribly interesting guy. I would have made polite conversation over a meal, but I am pretty sure I would not have seen him anywhere else other than the dinner table. I had no concerns about him in the least and had no notion of any complaints against him. At that time, I was a junior member of staff and would not have been consulted. I was only made aware of his allegations of abuse last year when he was referred to as Edgar.

Comments that have been made to the Inquiry about me

IRZ [REDACTED]

98. IRZ [REDACTED] has given a statement to the to the Inquiry. At paragraph 110 he says *'When my parents took me out of the school, we met Haslett the chaplain. We met him in his room in Donaldsons which was the new bit. My parents didn't hold back. I told him what had gone on and that it had happened under his nose. I was sixteen and I was emboldened. I knew I was leaving. Haslett asked me who it was and I gave him a couple of names. The implication was that he would beat them to within an inch of*

their lives. I don't think anything happened but he was aware of what was going on. I know that now, in the Inquiry, he's trying to absolve himself of everything.'

99. I have no recollection of this incident. I may well have taken it forward with whoever was named, though again I have no recollection of names. I certainly would not have suggested that I would have beaten anyone within an inch of their lives. I would never have used physical punishment. Whilst I certainly would have absolved myself in the Inquiry of knowing anything to do with sexual abuse, I would not have absolved myself of anything to do with bullying. I am perfectly open to discussing bullying and that I was aware of bullying at the academy.

Helping the Inquiry

100. I honestly cannot think of anything that could have been done better to encourage children to speak up more about abuse during my time at the academy. It still does worry me, and I still have this sense of failure, that there were pupils sitting in my class suffering, all caused by my colleagues. I could not understand how my colleagues could manipulate me. I asked myself was I just blind. I just don't know what else could have been done. I honestly can't see who could have supervised the house masters and how practically it would have worked. There must have been so much going on that was hidden and we have to believe the pupils now. I find it so upsetting.
101. [CH] certainly had an awareness of appearance but all for appearance's sake might be putting it a bit too strongly. I don't think there was any other city with so many private schools so there was a lot of competition. There was a commercial concern about reputation as fees were very important. If there had been any allegations, then it would have most certainly impacted on reputation.

Lessons to be learned

102. We could only have done differently if we had been able to overcome this culture of silence. I can't think of anything I could have done differently myself. I just wasn't aware of it. I was there, I did my best and it wasn't good enough. I obviously wasn't approachable for whatever reason and I now only think of my own failure.
103. Maybe looking back, trying to do the two roles of being a teacher having to use discipline and combining this with pastoral care was not ideal. If someone did not like you as a teacher, he might not want to speak to you pastorally. We know so little about teaching and why some children learn from teachers and others don't. I don't know if it is about personality.
104. Now looking back there should have been more people doing the pastoral role. Perhaps an independent person that could have been trusted should have been appointed as well. I don't know how the practicalities of that would work as how can you bring someone independent in that can be trusted. I just don't know how it would all work.

Other information

105. 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..... 22nd November 2023.....