

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

**Alistair MURRAY**

Support person present: No

1. My name is Alistair Fergus Horsburgh Murray. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1942. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Background**

2. I graduated at the University of Edinburgh with a Bachelor of Science degree. I obtained a Diploma in Education at the University of Oxford. I also have a summer Mountaineering Instructor Award and am qualified as a Winter Mountain Leader.
3. I taught chemistry at Fettes College from 1967 until 1973. I was employed at Anthony Gibbs Financial Planning from 1973 until 1974. I then taught chemistry at Gracemount High School in Edinburgh before returning to Fettes College Junior School in 1975, where I remained until 1995. After leaving Fettes, I had various appointments as a mountaineering guide and instructor until 2007.

### **Employment with Fettes College, Edinburgh**

4. As well as teaching at Fettes, in 1967 I was asked to do "Scouts" for a year before joining the army section of the Combined Cadet Force. I taught chemistry, science and geography at the Senior School. From 1967 to 1968 I was also the residential tutor at Carrington House. Between 1968 and 1973, I was a visiting tutor as I lived in my own property.

5. When I returned to Fettes in 1975, I was employed at the Junior School. I was involved in teaching science, geography and mathematics. I also supervised prep and "lights out" once a week. I organised various activities, including recreational camping, taking groups of mainly senior school pupils fishing. I was also involved in supervising rifle shooting on the school range as an after-school activity. For a few years in the seventies, I organised a cross-country team for various races. I was also very much involved in the Senior School Cadet Force.
6. My initial recruitment was carried out in London by SNR [REDACTED] FNP [REDACTED]. He had spoken to the headmaster of Abingdon School, where I did my teaching practice. When I was employed in my post at the Junior School, I was interviewed by FTG [REDACTED] who was SNR [REDACTED] Junior School. He already knew me from my earlier years at Fettes.
7. Between 1967 and 1973, my line master for Carrington House was Michael Leslie. I have no adverse things to say about him, but the house was really organised by the head boy. For my chemistry teaching, the head of department was Roger Miles. He arranged the syllabus, which I followed. Between 1975 and 1995, the science course had no text books so I wrote the two year course. Eventually, books were published which were purchased by the school. I did have plenty of opportunity to discuss the syllabus with Senior School staff, whom I knew. I suppose appraisal was in the form of results. I had no adverse feedback.
8. As far as training is concerned, I was largely trusted to teach my subject well. I did spend one day at Malvern College for the science course. When it came to supervision of prep and "lights out", the housemistress, FGA [REDACTED] gave me guidance and I reported to her when I had completed my tasks.

### **Policy**

9. My only responsibility for the residential care of the children was when it was a duty evening and I supervised prep and "lights out". I can't remember any changes to the policies in that regard as things seemed to work well and happily. Teachers carried

out the duties and also chatted to each other during the day. Basically, pupils were well-behaved. Punishment for poor homework was to do it again. There was no corporal punishment. CRS was SNR and there was regular communication about day-to-day events. I am not aware of any process for dealing with complaints and allegations against staff. I presume that they were attended to privately.

### **Strategic planning/Other staff/Recruitment and training of staff**

10. I didn't have any involvement in or responsibility for strategic planning in relation to the school. I can't give any detail about the school's strategic approach as I assume it was done by those at that level of involvement. I had no involvement in the management of staff employed at the school nor was I involved in the recruitment of staff to the school. I was not involved in the training of staff, but we were expected to keep up to date with our academic subjects.

### **Supervision/staff appraisal/staff evaluation**

11. I had no involvement in the supervision or appraisal of staff. There were no specific evaluations. Presumably, if there were any deficiencies, they would have been brought to notice.

### **Living arrangements**

12. Apart from one year when I was a resident tutor at Carrington House from 1967 to 1968, I lived outwith the school. Some of the staff lived in college accommodation, such as the housemasters and tutors. There was some detached accommodation for others. The rest of the staff lived outwith the college. The only people who had access to the children's residential area were the resident staff and the visiting duty tutor, who allowed those living-in to have time off.

### **Culture within Fettes College**

13. The culture within Fettes from 1967 to 1973 seemed happy. Senior pupils had significant responsibility in the running of the school. Fagging did exist but I was not aware of any abuse of this. I had no involvement in it. The housemasters ran the house and the senior second year sixth played a significant part in how the house was ran. Examples of fagging included cleaning of rugby boots and bringing a cups of cocoa into the sixth year's study at night time. When I was at the Junior School from 1975 until 1995, it seemed like a very happy environment. Fagging did not exist within the Junior School.

### **Discipline and punishment**

14. Between 1967 and 1973, staff and senior pupils were able to punish children. I'm not sure to what extent pupils could do this. I'm not aware of any formal policy in relation to discipline and punishment. However, for written punishments, a log was kept in the House. Duty members of staff would also sign the log book if they were covering for the housemaster. I don't know how staff and children at the school were made aware of any such formal policy. Senior pupils were able to exert discipline and I assume that was supervised by the housemaster.
15. Between 1975 and 1995, only staff were able to discipline and punish children at the Junior School. I'm not aware of any formal policy in relation to discipline and punishment at the Junior School.

### **Day to day running of the school**

16. I wasn't involved in the day to day running of the Junior School. I therefore cannot comment further on whether any child being abused or ill-treated would have come to light.

### **Concerns about the school**

17. I am not aware of the school being the subject of concern because of the way in which children and young people in the school were treated. If there were any such concerns, these would have been attended to by the housemaster and senior management.

### **Reporting of complaints/concerns**

18. If any pupil at the Junior School wished to make a complaint or report a concern, he could complain to any member of staff. I'm not aware of any formal route for complaints. I do not remember there being any complaints that were raised with the teaching staff. If there were complaints, I don't know where they would be recorded.

### **Trusted adult/confidante**

19. If a junior pupil had concerns or worries, I assume he could confide in the housemistress or the headmaster. I also hope that pupils would feel comfortable approaching any member of staff.

### **Abuse**

20. During my periods of employment at Fettes, the school did not have a definition of "abuse" that it applied in relation to the treatment of children at the school. Pupils had access to teachers and house staff at all times, but nothing was formally introduced up until I left in 1995.

### **Child protection arrangements**

21. I'm not aware of any specific guidance being given to staff on how children in their care should be treated, cared for and protected against abuse, ill-treatment or

inappropriate behaviour towards them. No guidance was given to staff on how to handle and respond to reports of the abuse or ill-treatment of children. If anything had arisen, staff would approach the headmaster or housemistress. I'm not aware of there being any arrangements in place to reduce the likelihood of abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate conduct by staff towards children at the school. However, the Junior School was a very open teaching location when it came to classrooms and the like. I assume that the children protection arrangements did work.

### **External monitoring**

22. I think there were three visits by inspectors, but I'm unsure of the dates. One was during my initial term of employment and the other two were during my second term of employment at the school. I don't know whether the inspectors spoke to pupils or whether staff were present when they did so. I do remember one inspector remarking on wildlife exhibits in the laboratory in a complimentary fashion. Otherwise, I did not receive any feedback from the inspectors.

### **Record-keeping**

23. I am not aware of any record keeping at the Junior School. If there were records, they would have been kept confidentially. Personally, apart from classwork, I did not keep records as anything which arose would go to the headmaster or housemistress.
24. Over the years, I took nearly a thousand junior pupils camping. I also arranged fishing trips. I completed log books for both the fishing and camping trips of who attended. After each trip, I would ask a pupil to complete the log book, recording their fond memories. I gave the log books to Andrew Murray, who was the head of history at the Senior School. Andrew Murray was also in charge of the archives at Fettes at one stage.

## **Investigations into abuse/Reports of abuse and civil claims/Police investigations**

25. I was not involved in any investigations into allegations of abuse or ill-treatment of children at the school. I was not involved in handling of reports to the school by former pupils. Further, I was not aware of any police investigation into alleged abuse at the school.

### **Specific alleged abusers**

*Anthony Chenevix-Trench*

26. I do recall Anthony Chenevix-Trench. He was the headmaster when I was at Fettes. My employment coincided with his tenure, but I can't remember which years. He was more than sixty years old. I remember him as being very pleasant and cheerful, but I didn't know him personally. Basically, I have no personal knowledge of his relationship with pupils and did not see him discipline children or abuse children.

CBU

27. I recall CBU I don't know when he arrived at Fettes but he was still there when I retired. I would guess that he was thirty to forty years old. He taught and I think he was a house tutor, along with other duties. I knew him as an enthusiastic and good member of staff. He came to the summer Cadet Force camp for the catering and he did it well. I didn't know him socially. I did see him with children, but to no great extent. I didn't see anything adverse in that regard. I didn't see him discipline children nor did I see him abuse children. I didn't hear about him abusing children.

DXM

28. DXM was not at Fettes during my employment. He was there in my two years away from Fettes and I believe he left soon after arriving.

CDZ

29. I do recall CDZ I coincided with him during my years teaching at the Junior School, but I'm not sure which years. He was about forty years old. CDZ was a teacher and also had various other roles, including games, He was a colleague of mine. He was a cheerful and friendly member of staff. I knew him pretty well at school, but not socially. I did see him with children and I have no criticism of him in that regard. I did not see him disciplining or abusing children, nor did I hear of him abusing children.

*William Stein*

30. I remember William Stein, but not well. I would estimate he was between forty and fifty years old and my employment coincided with him some time in the seventies and eighties. He was involved in management of the swimming pool. I don't remember much about him as I didn't meet him to any extent. He seemed pleasant but I didn't know him well. I don't remember seeing him with children as I didn't visit his teaching. I did not see him discipline children or abuse children. I did hear vague rumours about him, but no details. I cannot elaborate on that further as I have no knowledge to elaborate on.

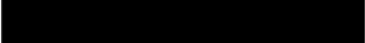
**Additional question about CDZ**

31. I have been told by the Inquiry that a number of applicants and former pupils allege that CDZ physically and sexually assaulted them. This has come as a complete shock to me. I have also been told by the Inquiry that an applicant and former pupil at Fettes recalls a specific occasion at a Junior School assembly when Mr CDZ appeared to lose control of himself, screaming at and then violently manhandling a pupil, He has stated that another teacher, Mr Minyeko, and myself had to intervene and wrestle Mr CDZ away from the pupil. I am surprised about this and I cannot remember the occasion at the assembly. I can only surmise that Andrew Minyeko was principally involved in this. This does not imply that the information provided to the Inquiry is incorrect.



**Helping the Inquiry**

- 32. When it comes to lessons that can be learned to protect children in boarding school, now and in the future, I would presume that much more formality has been added to child protection and the care of pupils since 1995.
  
- 33. 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 *16 November 2020.* .....

