

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Wladyslaw Andrew MINEYKO

Support person present: No

1. My name is Wladyslaw Andrew Mineyko and I am known as Andrew. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1950. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I graduated from Aberdeen University with an MA (Hons) in Spanish Studies in 1973. I then continued my education to study a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at Craiglockhart College and graduated in 1974. From August 1974 to August 1975 I worked as a Spanish and French teacher at St David's Roman Catholic High School in Dalkeith. Then, from September 1975 to July 1980 I was employed as a teacher at Fettes Junior School in Edinburgh. After that, from September 1980 I worked at Prestwich High School in Bury until December 1983. In half-term, in November 1983, I got married and left that school at Christmas 1983 and from January 1984 to July 1997 my wife and I ran a small hotel in Perthshire.

Employment with Fettes Junior school, Edinburgh

3. I was employed as a teacher of French by Fettes Junior School from September 1975 to July 1980. I occasionally also taught Latin and English. I also did some coaching in sports, including rugby union, hockey, cricket and athletics and that was part of my job.

4. In those days it was a day school so I had no boarding house duties, nor junior school 'House Tutor' responsibilities.
5. In 1976 I became a Lieutenant in the CCF of Fettes College. This involved supervising pipe band practices and instructing in small arms use, as well as in 1976 and 1977 assisting at CCF summer camp and in the Easter vacation, 'winter warfare' training each year until 1980. The summers of 1978, 1979 and 1980 saw me in charge of the Cadet Force rifle team at the annual schools' meeting at Bisley. I had learned to shoot when I was at school as a pupil myself.
6. I had one interview with SNR [REDACTED] the Junior School, FTG [REDACTED], and a very short meeting with him and the College's Headmaster, Anthony Chenevix-Trench, whose reputation from his time at Eton always bothered me. Knowing that he was 'trigger-happy' with the cane made me uncomfortable with his use of the cane. I knew of his reputation from reports in newspapers that I had read one or two years before I worked at Fettes. Also, I met one or two people in later life who were pupils at Eton at the same time as he was the Head. That re-enforced my view of him. I took the post only because it did not involve direct contact nor day-to-day rulings from him.
7. My only reference was from Mr Tom O'Malley, Head of St David's RC High School in Dalkeith, which was a very kind one, being also my report on my probationary year as a teacher.
8. As far as I remember, Fettes College, in toto, required GTCS registration by the mid-1970s.
9. At St David's, my line manager was, of course, my head of department. Fettes Junior School was small, to the extent that I was the only teacher of French: my line manager was [REDACTED] FTG [REDACTED] and for the year 1979 to 1980 SNR [REDACTED] the Junior School, Mr CRS [REDACTED]
10. On moving to Prestwich, the Head of Modern Languages was my usual contact for guidance and directions in teaching style, discipline, etc

11. There was no training at Fettes Junior School. Other teachers were much more experienced than me and I just fitted in. Where the CCF was concerned I went through the normal training for a cadet force officer.

Culture within Fettes College, Edinburgh

12. My main impressions are that several Houses were very lax in any sort of adherence to school rules and distinctly subversive towards some: this involved no abuse of pupils. I steered clear of senior school involvement, apart from CCF, as there were politics going on between the Houses and staff. I also taught in a separate building. For example, I had arranged rifle practice on an outdoor range and before the bus came to collect us, I met two of the boys I was taking with me walking out of the school gates. I asked them where they were going and they told me 'up town'. They told me they had permission and this was despite their Housemaster knowing they were going on a cadet force outing. It was actually live rifle firing practice and very difficult to get a booking. The Housemaster had simply told them that was not important. I didn't recall which House it was or the name of the Housemaster. This answer applies to the College, obviously, as the Junior School did not have 'Houses'. I heard from being in the staff common room of various attitudes of staff members to what went on within the school. I don't recall hearing anything that caused me great concern.
13. I do not know if fagging existed, but I think not.

Discipline and Punishment

14. Being a day school, the Junior School, with pupils coming in from all over Edinburgh, and even from Fife, and with physical discipline not allowed, I suppose that we had little means of punishment in the Junior School. There were one or two Junior pupils who boarded with Mr and Mrs Orchard, and one or two who boarded in the house of Mr and Mrs [FTF-SPO] or Mr and Mrs Philp, and also with Mr and Mrs [FTG-SPQ] I think

some of these pupils had parents who lived overseas or too far away to be a day pupil. They were treated by the school as day pupils.

15. In the Junior School, I think the policy was 'no physical – refer to Headmaster'. I think I was told this on joining the staff.
16. The possibility of discipline being the responsibility of senior pupils did not apply to a 2 ½ year day school for pupils aged 10 who would leave at age 12 ½ years old. There were no senior pupils in the Junior School.

Trusted adult/confidante

17. If a child in the school had worries I suppose that they could have talked to the Junior School staff or, of course, their parents whom they saw nightly. Within the Junior School the practice did not change.
18. I do not know if children in practice raised concerns in this way.

Abuse

19. Within the Junior School, the school did not have a definition of "abuse" that it applied in relation to the treatment of children.

Child Protection arrangements

20. I do not remember any instructions to staff about how children in their care should be treated or cared for other than 'with respect'.
21. I also do not remember any guidance and instruction for staff on how to handle reports of abuse or ill-treatment of children. Particularly given the small size of the Junior School it was 'up to you', i.e. total autonomy in relation to these matters.

22. I was not aware of any child protection arrangements in place at the Junior School.

Investigations into abuse – personal involvement

23. I was not involved in any investigation on behalf of the school into allegations of abuse of children at the school or into inappropriate behaviour by staff towards children.

Specific alleged abusers

24. I recall both of the names the Inquiry has asked me about. My employment coincided with their employment from 1975 to 1980.

Anthony Chenevix-Trench

25. Anthony Chenevix-Trench was to retire in 1979 so he was aged about 65 to 70. Anthony Chenevix-Trench was Headmaster of the whole College.
26. Anthony Chenevix-Trench was totally remote. I probably did not speak to him more than half a dozen times.
27. I remember Anthony Chenevix-Trench's reputation from his time at Eton. He was a weak headmaster. Some of the Housemasters were allowed to be far too lax and did not expect pupils to stick by school rules. The Housemasters did not enforce school rules within the Houses. No action was taken from above to prevent this happening. The Housemasters ran their houses more or less as they wished and without interference from the Headmaster.
28. Anthony Chenevix-Trench was not my cup of tea, even allowing for his World War Two experiences. I did not know Anthony Chenevix-Trench at all well.

29. I did not see him with children.
30. Anthony Chenevix-Trench was always fond of the youngest. This does not imply that I have any suspicions concerning his behaviour. I did not see him disciplining or abusing children. I heard of him abusing children when he was at Eton. I never heard this being discussed amongst the staff. He had been at the school for some time before I arrived and they had had become used to him. I don't know if there was surprise at his appointment as I wasn't at the school at that time.

CDZ

31. CDZ could have been any age from 35 to 40 when I started, but I may be well out in my guess. CDZ taught and coached within the junior school. I knew CDZ as a colleague.
32. I remember CDZ was good to talk to, once one got beneath the hard shell. He was always firm, even hard, or at least brittle. He lived on a short fuse. He took no nonsense from pupils and the telling off he gave was always quite severe. His tone was severe, but in my experience not abusive. He was good at
33. CDZ was pleasant, but not a kindred spirit. I did not know him outside of school hours.
34. I saw him with children, at, or travelling to, school. With children, he was always firm, but did not usually go too far. That I remember, he did give one or two of our youngsters rather too much of a 'telling' for their age, but I should never have recalled the incident below had the Inquiry not raised it. I did not see him disciplining or abusing children. I recall very little of my time at the school generally and cannot recall any other incidents involving Mr CDZ. I do not recall any response from either Mr Chenevix-Trench or Mr FTG but if there was, it was more likely to have been Mr FTG as SNR the Junior School.
35. I do not remember hearing allegations that CDZ sexually abused pupils. The former pupil's allegation of a physical assault that I intervened in to stop, stirs a faint

memory. I am not sure that Fergus Murray and I had to 'wrestle' CDZ [REDACTED] off the victim, but that, in general, the incident did happen. I cannot believe that the matter was so physical that we had to wrestle Mr CDZ [REDACTED] off the victim. I think it is more likely that we caused Mr CDZ [REDACTED] to calm down and stop shouting at the pupil. If there had been a physical incident like that described that I would have recalled it.

Helping the Inquiry

36. The only suggestions I can think of as lessons to be learned would financially ruin all education authorities and all private schools, both day and boarding. I suppose the psychological testing of teachers might help and more detailed medical reports, physical ones. Teachers would require a paid-for course in psychology and training in treating all pupils equally, a teacher-training assessment or an apprentice-style training scheme. To run that for all teaching applicants would be expensive to pay for the training and the board and lodging before they qualify as teachers. Then the trainee teachers could decide whether they can manage dealing with such issues as teachers: some will dropout, but better the initial expense than future court cases.
37. 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..... [REDACTED]

Dated..... 23 JAN 21