

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

JPA

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is JPA however my full name given to me at birth was JPA. My date of birth is [REDACTED], 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going to Keil School, Dumbarton

2. I have been known as JPA since birth. I don't know why my mother did it that way. I was known as JPA at school too. I was born in Greenock. My mother was [REDACTED], who became [REDACTED]. My father was [REDACTED], who was a [REDACTED].
3. My older brother [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] older than me and, consequently, he went to Keil [REDACTED] before me. My sister [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] younger than me. Her married name is [REDACTED].
4. I went to Keil school in 1974. My brother was allegedly more academically gifted than I was. He did the eleven plus at primary school and his score was such that the headmaster called my parents in and said that he felt my brother would benefit from going to a better school than the local grammar school. He suggested they applied for a bursary to send my brother to Keil. My dad had a history of boarding school. He went to [REDACTED], so he wanted to take that route with [REDACTED]. He was sent to do a bursary examination to get into Keil. He didn't pass to get a full

bursary, he got a three quarters bursary. My parents weren't particularly wealthy and still couldn't afford to send him. My family had been wealthy in generations past and a lot of the money had gone to family members [REDACTED]. We had a maiden aunt there who decided my brother should go and she would make up the shortfall on the money.

5. [REDACTED] went to Keil school for six years, so my relationship with him from that point has always been strained. [REDACTED] I've not really spent much time with my brother as a result of that. [REDACTED] My parents had Keil school on a pedestal. My brother did quite well academically and went to university and they were of the belief that it wouldn't have happened had he gone to the local grammar school.
  
6. By the time I reached eleven it was decided that I too should be sent off to do a bursary examination. I didn't pass and my parents couldn't afford to send me. Some arrangement was made with the same maiden aunt that my parents would pick up some of the fees but she would pick up the rest. This was down to the fact that she didn't want my brother to have an advantage that I didn't get. So that's how I ended up going. My sister wasn't given the same opportunity. It was always a male thing in my family. I don't think she would have wanted to go anyway, she was a very strong, independent girl. So that's how I ended up going to Keil. It had become the norm in my family and my parents thought it was the thing they should do to give me the best start in life.
  
7. Although I was born in Greenock, I was brought up in [REDACTED], which is a little village [REDACTED] in Argyll. So from birth to eleven years old I stayed in [REDACTED] and I went to [REDACTED] primary school. I had some very close friendships there, in particular a strong bond with a boy called [REDACTED] in primary five, six and seven. We spent all our holidays together, all our time off together. From the time I went to boarding school I never really saw him again, so that was an immediate severing of what were close ties that I had at home.

8. [REDACTED] So the best method of communication with the rest of Scotland is by car ferry. Up to 1978-1979 there was only one company supplying the ferry, this was Caledonian McBrayne. I think it was the Caledonian Steampacket company at that time. The ferry finished at six o'clock, so to go by ferry to Keil took about an hour and twenty minutes by boat, then a car journey. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When the ferries were off or the winter weather was bad you had to go round by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and that could take quite a time. It could be over two hours in bad weather.

9. My dad [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] so he got regular income coming in from that. I know they made sacrifices to send me and my brother to Keil. I think [REDACTED] picked up the majority of the fees for the six years. The wealth in my family tended to go to women as the men were expected to fend for themselves. My [REDACTED] was wealthy and I think felt a duty to pay some of that back.

10. A question I've played in my mind is whether I was happy going to boarding school? I was eleven going on twelve and it had always been held up to me by my family to go to this wonderful place, that my brother had been privileged to go to and had done so well. I felt quite unique and privileged. There was a feeling of being special in some way – as my primary classmates were preparing to go the local secondary I had a special status. On the other hand there was some trepidation, stepping out into the great unknown on my own. I think I had a sense of mixed emotions about going.

11. I was sent as a full boarder. There were three options, day pupils, if you lived near the school, weekly boarders, which meant you stayed Monday to Friday at the school then went home to parents at weekends, or full boarders, which meant you stayed for the whole term. I was despatched under the latter arrangement. A full

boarder was allowed permissions to leave the school. You were allowed one weekend permission per term, which meant you could go home on a Friday night and returned to the school on a Sunday night, or two daily permissions to leave at one o'clock on Saturday afternoon after rugby and come back at seven o'clock that night.

12. I didn't know anyone at the school. I recognised a couple of faces from the bursary examination but that was it. I had no associations at all. I had a very complicated relationship with my mother and I think some of it came out in my childhood. She had built me up saying, "you'll be captain of the rugby team and make friends for life, and you will be staying with friends", and building it up to something it wasn't going to be, but that was just her. I don't know if my father was a day pupil or a boarder at [REDACTED], but he went through the boarding school regime. Funnily enough my brother told me my dad had hated it. He didn't have that conversation with me, so I don't know whether that's true or not.

### **Keil School, Dumbarton**

13. I'd been to Keil regularly to see my brother. I knew what it looked like but I didn't know what it would be like to live there or to know what the regime was going to be like. It was a big sprawl of land. It was in quite a wealthy area of Dumbarton, in the Helenslee area. There was a boundary wall that ran down the side of the school as you look at the front of it, on the left hand side, on the west side and there was a field that ran through that. Next to that was one of the worst housing estates for poverty in Dumbarton called Brucehill. So on one side of this field was this area of privileged, entitled young men and on the other was this area of deprivation. So there were continuous problems with people from that council estate coming into the school grounds and issues happening with them.
14. There was one massive big mansion house, which was the former home of an industrial person from the Victorian age and that was where most things took place, it was known as 'school house'. At the very end of a very long drive was a coach house for the big house. That was where the new boys boarded and it was called

New House. So you were quite a distance away from the school. On the south side of the grounds was Mason House, where second and third year boys stayed. School House was dormitory accommodation for fourth to sixth year boys. They had taken over another house out with the main grounds of the school, a stone's throw away in this affluent area, which they called Isla Kerr House named after a former head master. This was also dormitory accommodation for fourth, fifth and some sixth year boys.

15. There were some external classrooms, really just prefabricated buildings, used as overflow from the main building. The grounds were laid out with lots of trees and grassy areas, it was really quite pleasant. You went down the hill next to the sea and there was a cliff and in front of the cliff were the sports pitches. We had three rugby pitches and two cricket squares in the sports fields. So that's really an outline of what the school looked like during the course of my time there.
16. There were always discussions on whether public schools should be charitable. I can remember two big debates, I think there was a labour government then. It would have been Harold Wilson and then Jim Callaghan and they were looking at privileged schools and their charitable status being withdrawn. Keil were up in arms about that. They were very much their own ship and had their own rules.
17. I had two head teachers in my time there. The first was Edwin Jess, who my parents thought was just the most marvellous man in the world. To me he was just a silly old man. He left round about my third year and he was replaced by a chap called John Widdowson, who had been headmaster at a school in Helensburgh. Below them you had masters, we didn't have teachers, we had masters. There was a sort of second in charge to the headmaster, called a bursar. He was an ex-military chap and I don't really know what he did but he was in charge of admin.
18. The masters were in charge of teaching and had overall responsibility for the running of the school. But it was really strange because at some time, and I don't know when it happened, they had decided that it would be good for the boys development, for their responsibility, that the older boys would be in charge of discipline at the school.

These boys were called chiefs. We had a series of chiefs and a senior chief, who was the top dog. They were all sixth year pupils. You have to remember there's only a maximum of two hundred pupils in the school, so there were twelve to fourteen boys who were seventeen and eighteen years old and they ran the school.

Underneath them were fifth year boys. There would be about twenty of them, maybe just less than that. Some of them would be deputies. They had less responsibility than the chiefs.

19. In my first year there were two chiefs and two deputies in New House. They were in charge of discipline and running of the school, and they were, to all intents and purposes, my corporate parents. I was thirty-one years as a police officer. I have dealt with people of all ages. To invest that level of responsibility in children, and children who had grown up in that strange environment, to me is quite wrong.
20. Chiefs are commonly called prefects in other schools, but the chiefs were a lot more important than prefects. They were ultimately the arbiters of justice and had a lot more responsibility. They made sure everyone was back in the dorm at night, lights were out, that people were quiet, behaviour was maintained and they supervised homework sessions. They also made sure the cleaning was done because the boys were responsible for that. The boys were also responsible for the school grounds being maintained.
21. The chiefs carried a tremendous amount of responsibility for people who were largely immature. You could only be a chief if you were in sixth year. Although some had qualifications to go to university after fifth year, some of them chose to come back to school, to do a sixth year and become a chief. The senior chief was the one the headmaster thought was most responsible. The deputies were fifth year boys who had less responsibility. Each boarding house had a house master. The chiefs should have sought advice from the housemaster, but in reality the housemaster played very little role whatsoever. The chiefs were chosen by the headmaster, I think in consultation with the senior staff, and told what duties they would carry out. So there were two in each house.

22. My first year was in New House, which was an old converted stable block. At the back of the stable block was a chemistry lab and underneath the dormitory area was the woodwork and technical drawing departments. The whole floor of the stable block was a dorm, which contained twenty-four boys of twelve years or younger. Upstairs was the chief's room, a normal sized bedroom with two beds in it. Next to the door downstairs was the deputies room. We were all first year students, spread between eleven, I was twelve, and some during the course of the year would become thirteen.
  
23. You stayed one year in New House then you went down to Mason House, which was on two floors as well. Second year we were on the upper floor, third year were on the lower floor. That was a big thing because you were then sharing a boarding house with the class above you, boys a year older than you. So moving from New House to Mason House was not easy. In fourth year you were sent to either School House or Isla Kerr and you did fourth and fifth year there. By the time I reached sixth year they had closed New House down. So first year pupils came to Mason House. I don't know why that happened.
  
24. Being in New House was barbaric. You had a metal framed bed and a horse hair mattress. These were the days before duvets. You had linen sheets and a tartan rug and a horse hair blanket. The heating system was largely insufficient, so winter was very cold. To get there every night you'd have to walk up this long drive with the fear that the boys from Brucehill were going to jump over the wall and attack you. You couldn't walk on your own, you had to go up in groups. It was really quite a shock to the system. You went down to the main building for breakfast, back down for classes, changing for rugby practice and back down to train then up to get changed for school and back, so you could be up and down that drive five or six times a day. You had to be there at night for prep, which was our homework and you walked back up to the dormitory about half past eight at night. In summer it didn't seem so bad, but you were probably more at risk because it was more likely people were out. Winter was a very scary thing, particularly at weekends if you had to go up on your own as there were less pupils about.

25. The Mason House housemaster had a house at the side of the dormitory block and each of the dorms, upstairs and down had doors that led to his house so he could step from his door into the dormitory at any time. In my time there that was CDL CDL The Isla Kerr housemaster had a house with his family attached to it – throughout my time that was CDK In School House there was a flat that the housemaster lived in, in my time it was Ian McDonald. New House was slightly different. The house master didn't live there. I don't know where he lived. He came in his Jaguar car and it would pull up outside, but I'm not quite sure where he lived, out with or on the school grounds. In my time his name was QQY
26. I was given five pounds pocket money for the term. I gave it to the housemaster, QQY, who kept it in a tin and put it in the book. He would come in and do the banking on a Thursday night. He would sit at a table and you would come forward and ask him for fifty pence from your money and he would decide if you could get it or not. This was also when discipline would happen, so if anyone was to be belted it would happen while he was there. There would be one visit a week by him on a Thursday night after prep. That would be about nine o'clock at night. There was no regular contact with an adult. My safety and well-being was looked after by a seventeen and eighteen year old boy in the main.
27. It was an all-boys school until I reached sixth year when the [REDACTED] decided his daughter should come to the school – her name was [REDACTED]. So this poor one girl started attending as a day pupil. The year after I left I think they took in two or three other girls but for the exception of one girl, it was all boys during my time there.
28. Keil was originally in Campbeltown. It burnt down around the first world war and re-situated in Dumbarton. There was a trust called the McKinnon McNeil Trust, which was money left aside to pay bursaries for boys from Argyll. So a lot of full boarders came from the Argyll area. The weekly boarders were from the Glasgow area and the day pupils were from the around the Vale of Leven area. There were some kids who came from further afield, but generally speaking they were from the west of Scotland. As the school progressed, around my third year, when they were finding it



hard to recruit people they brought in a load of Iranian boys and boys from South Africa. In my fourth and fifth years some Chinese boys arrived. The weird thing for me in fifth year was that I left School House and moved to Isla Kerr and I shared a room for four people with three Chinese boys. They could hardly speak English and I spent a year with them. It was a real clash of cultures.

### **Routine at Keil School, Dumbarton**

#### *First day*

29. I started Keil at the start of September 1974, slightly later than the mainstream schools. My parents took me up. You unpacked your trunk, put it into the trunk room and off they went. You were on your own after that. During the first four weeks you weren't allowed to see your parents or allowed to leave the school grounds. When I spoke to my brother a few weeks ago and told him I was doing this, he told me he found that first four weeks extremely difficult. I have no great recollection of it other than they took us out in a mini-bus to play cross country cricket near Vale of Leven. They tried to occupy us. I think it was just to break you into the school regime and discipline.
30. We finished our school term at the end of June but started two weeks after everyone else. What was hard for me was seeing the boys that went home at the weekend, having their parents drop them off on Sunday nights. There were only ten or twelve of us that had none of that and were full boarders. To a certain extent that was quite hard to take.
31. My parents helped me with my trunk and to choose my bed. My mother helped me make my bed up, hung up my clothes in the wooden wardrobe that we were given then off they went. It was a slightly strange thing. ██████████ had been the chief in ██████████ House the year before ██████████ started. So he had been in charge of discipline and regimentation for the year immediately preceding ██████████. They knew ██████████ was coming, so there was great interest from that year to come up and see what ██████████ brother was like. So ██████████ had a strange introduction where there was a lot of older boys hanging

about downstairs to see what [REDACTED] looked like. It was like something out of an Enid Blyton book. It was a very surreal arrival. I don't remember any staff being there on my first day, just chiefs and deputies and they helped carry things up.

32. I cannot remember when I first met my housemaster, I think he came to the dorm on the first night with chiefs and tried to explain the daily routine. I'll never forget that night. There was a boy called [REDACTED] and the first night there he just cried all night. He only stayed one year, he didn't come back the second year. I remember lying in my bed, my future ahead of me, anxious, listening to the boy opposite me crying. It has lived with me. I've often said, how can you send children away at twelve years old? I could never do that. And yet some people go at eight, it's so cruel.
  
33. The reason I contacted the Child abuse inquiry came from a work meeting I attended. It was a session on attachment theory and they started talking about how certain people, particularly high profile politicians of the day, potentially behave the way they do (with an apparent lack of empathy) because of the separation from their parents as children due to boarding school. It really upset me, because my relationship with my mother wasn't good throughout my life, in fact it wasn't particularly good with my father either. In fact the only sibling I'm close to is my sister. I actually got really distressed talking about that and my mind started drifting back to school. I remembered my first house master particularly clearly possibly because I was in fear of him and I wanted to know what happened to him. I googled him. As stated earlier, his name was [REDACTED] <sup>QQY</sup> As a young boy of twelve I'd have thought he was much older. He was younger than some of the other teachers when I think about it. He was probably thirty-five or thirty-six. His hair was going grey with a golden blonde sheen to it. He wasn't an old man. He was a [REDACTED] teacher and [REDACTED] was my favourite subject, so I really enjoyed what he taught, so it was weird.
  
34. This isn't about me coming to the Inquiry with a particular axe to grind about any individual. I wasn't sexually abused. My grievance is with the regime. To me it was barbaric. Two things have made me want to give evidence to the Inquiry. Firstly the

impact it had on the relationship with my family. Secondly, I've recently been a

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] we had a boy, well he will be a man now come to speak to us about his experience of being in care. He's actually pretty high profile. He was there at the launch of the report and he's regularly quoted on Twitter. He's life experienced in care and very articulate and has done very well at putting forward a case about the tragic circumstances many youngsters grow up in and how it affects their life outcomes. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I said it doesn't seem that different to my time at boarding school. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] But actually he didn't see the parallels and I didn't have an affluent upbringing, my life in many ways was quite barbaric and cruel and I didn't have a choice about whether I wanted that or not. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] If we're going to recognise the abuse, and rightly recognise the abuse that these young men and women have went through in being separated, it doesn't make them different from me. I have an equally important story to tell.

35. I spent a childhood in solitude. From twelve to fourteen I was on my own, sometimes with imaginary friends and companions. When I went home I didn't have my close friend [REDACTED]. So I spent school holidays alone. I had a solitary upbringing and a barbaric existence. I'm not here to complain about [REDACTED] or anyone else, but I'll mention things that went wrong. I want people to recognise that the care system wasn't that much different from being separated from my parents and yet my family paid for it.
36. I would certainly say I suffered physical abuse, perhaps not as much as some other people did. I definitely suffered emotional abuse and my parents made sacrifices for me to go there. It shaped who I am as an adult and it shaped my relationship with my

children and it certainly shaped my relationship with my parents and my wider family. It's only now that I'm managing to assimilate my thoughts around why that should be.

37. Things got better as you moved up the years, your level of recognition at the school and ability to be yourself improved as you matured. I think the most harmful part of my upbringing was from twelve to fourteen years old. By fifteen to sixteen I was largely attuned to it. When I got to sixth year I was really good at table tennis and by that time we'd gone out drinking, as you do at seventeen and eighteen. I never had enough money, so on occasions I used to play people at table tennis, giving them a seventeen to nothing lead for fifty pence to try and get enough money for a can of beer. It always seemed to me that other pupils had far more money available to them than I.
38. To my memory Edwin Jess was a very frail, old man. The headmaster's house was a stone's throw from New House and he lived there with his family. Sadly, one summer holiday he got very badly beaten up on his way up the drive by some people from Brucehill and I think that precipitated his early retirement. There was also a strange occasion when a boy got attacked heading over to Isla Kerr. I think I might have been in second year at the time and the police were called in. I was thirty-one years in the police and I sometimes laugh at what they did in the generation before me because they weren't particularly good. They hid in bushes and made the boys walk up one by one to see if they would be attacked. It seems a horrendous thing to do. So there was occasional involvement with the police. There was a lot of times the boys ran away and I don't know how often the police were informed of that, but I remember a couple of occasions. I'd think the headmaster would involve them as it was a very bad assault.
39. Widdowson arrived and he changed the headmaster's house. There was a cottage at Isla Kerr that he moved into. He was a very peculiar man with very high ideas of himself. There were a couple of houses and flats that teachers could occupy. When Edwin Jess left the maths teacher, John McNeill and his family moved into his house – I think he took over as housemaster from QQY who left about the time I

was in third year. John McNeill was a decent man and ran the school Scripture Union. Fifty per cent or above of the staff lived elsewhere.

40. One strange thing was that there was [REDACTED] female teacher, a very pretty lady, who taught [REDACTED]. Her name was [REDACTED]<sup>QQW</sup>. She started the year I did. She was in her twenties I would think and she had two young boys as I recall. All the boys in the school wanted to do [REDACTED]. We had a nurse, Miss Simpson, who we called matron, who was in her sixties. She had an assistant and there were ladies who worked in the kitchen. Apart from that there were no females in the school. So in your formative years, twelve to fourteen, there was very little feminine company or influence and to me that's a very important thing. We knew that the [REDACTED] teacher had a very close friendship with a boy the year above me. He was an [REDACTED] boy called [REDACTED]. When he got to fifth year they were always in each other's company and there were rumours that she was having an affair with him. But strangely I went to a party in Rothesay three years after I left school, about 1983, and she turned up with a boy called [REDACTED], who was in the year below me – it was a boy in his year, [REDACTED], who was holding the party in his parents home (I was working with [REDACTED] in the Clydesdale Bank at the time). It became apparent that Mrs [REDACTED]<sup>QQW</sup> had left her husband for [REDACTED] and since married him. Strangely [REDACTED] I don't know what her background was before she came to Keil but she was obviously attracted to younger boys. So whether that's why she took that job, I don't know. I don't mean that in a cruel way as I understand her marriage to [REDACTED] survived.
41. I can't remember any teachers being old boys. There were teachers who had been there for twenty to thirty years, a number of them. There was a chap, Ian McDonald, who taught technical drawing and lived in a flat at the School House and he had been there for most of his adult life I think. He was a single man and Keil was just his life. The [REDACTED] teacher was called [REDACTED]<sup>CDL</sup>. He was the housemaster at Mason House and his whole family grew up there. He had been there for years as well. I think [REDACTED]<sup>QQY</sup> had started the year before I arrived and became the housemaster the year I started. So he was relatively new to the school. When Ian McDonald retired [REDACTED]<sup>CDL</sup> moved into the flat in the school and took over his

duties as his wife had died and his family had moved away. A chap called [OCQ] [OCQ] arrived at mason House as house master as replacement for Mr [CDL]

*Mornings and bedtime*

42. We got up at seven o'clock in the morning. The chiefs would come in and ring a bell. We had to make our bed and get washed and dressed by twenty past seven. You then went to your duties. The school didn't hire cleaners, so the boys did it. Jobs that I had were sweeping the dorm, cleaning the toilets and the corridors and cleaning the art class. The best job I ever had was in fourth year. I was in charge of collecting the papers for the masters. So I wandered down to the newsagents and came back with the papers. But we were in charge of cleaning the school. There were big buffers for the floor, which was linoleum. You mopped on some liquid stuff then buffed the floor. We did the chores until eight o'clock, then went to breakfast until half past eight. We then did another half hour cleaning and classes were at nine o'clock.
43. We were in class until one o'clock, then we had lunch. From two until four o'clock in the afternoon it was rugby practice, or in the summer it was cricket. We went back to classes from four until six o'clock then had tea until half past six. Prep was from quarter to seven until half past eight, then lights out at half past nine. So you had an hour to get back to your dorm and ready for bed. You had very little free time, everything was regimental. In the summer, when there wasn't cricket you did gardening, swept leaves, cleaned the drive and cut the grass.
44. There's something that's lived with me horrifically throughout my life. It happened in the September in I think my second year. The school lived on its reputation that everybody played sport, even if you didn't like it. Out of one hundred and eighty pupils we turned out seven rugby teams every weekend. The pitches were just left, you never ran lawnmowers over them apart from cutting the lines. What they used to do was mark out the lines with creosote. It was the chiefs that did the lines. They would put a rope down and cut the line with a lawnmower and then come along with the creosote machine and put the line in. This particular year the boy that was doing it decided that he wasn't going to bother with the rope. He got all the first and second

year boys to stand in a straight line and as he came along with the lawnmower they would jump out of the way and he would keep going. One boy didn't jump out of the way in time and he went straight over his foot with the lawnmower and he was severely injured. That's health and safety for you. I can't remember the name of the boy who was using the lawnmower. The injured boy's name was [REDACTED]. He did recover. He lives in Canada now, I've got him on LinkedIn. None of the chores were supervised by adult staff, the boys were in charge. I remember him going to hospital. He was a good rugby player. He had a big bandage on his foot for some time.

45. The masters took the rugby. There was a guy called <sup>CDK</sup> [REDACTED] who was the [REDACTED]. He also taught [REDACTED]. <sup>QQY</sup> [REDACTED] was our [REDACTED] in first year. They would take rugby training but the boys put the posts up and the cross bar on and got it all ready. <sup>CDL</sup> [REDACTED] was in charge of the [REDACTED] and used to maintain the [REDACTED].
46. Bedtime for the first years was half past nine, quarter to ten for the second years and ten o'clock for thirds years. You got an extra fifteen minutes as you progressed through the years. There was a television at the end of the dormitory. There was a room downstairs, a back room that went through to the chemistry lab. It had a rounded staircase and it was known as the pulpit room and there was a television there. Half the time you could never get a signal so we never really used it. Around about second year I think, the TV series Starsky and Hutch came on and we got to stay up to watch it until ten o'clock. At half past nine to quarter to ten chiefs would come in and switch off the lights, then it was no talking after ten o'clock. They didn't bother too much at weekends. You could chat away in bed.
47. In first year you were in a dormitory, like a hospital ward. You had a metal bed and a little bed space. There were no tables or chairs beside your bed, it was basic. In second and third year it was a bit more improved, much the same but a newer building. In fourth year I moved into a dorm in School House with seven or eight boys in it. It was a slightly bigger room with a bit more space. That's when there was room for record players. Cassette recorders were out by then and the radio would be on a

bit more often. The thing that struck me about fourth year was out of eight people in my room I was the only one who didn't smoke, so a lot of people would go out into the grounds and smoke. I just never liked the smell of it. In fifth year I was moved into the room with the Chinese boys. There were four of us in the room.

48. As you got older the facilities got better, I think there were two shower rooms in Isla Kerr. By that time I was growing out of a childish hang up I had that I didn't like to shower in the presence of others, so I was showering with everybody else after rugby. The important part of all that was my formative years, where I just wanted to have a bit of privacy, be alone, and I just didn't have that at all.

*Mealtimes / Food*

49. There was an extension to the school house and the dining block was in that. There were long tables, at the top was the master's table. there were long tables for the boys to sit at. A chief or a deputy would sit at the top of each table and then it would be by year, so first year, followed by second year, third year and so on. In first year we took up two or three tables. You would go through and get the food and the plates and put them in front of the chief and he would serve up the food and it would be passed down the line.
50. The food was really awful, it was dreadful. I was a very slight boy because I didn't eat, I must have been malnourished. My mum was always telling me to eat my greens, but there was nobody there to do that. So if I didn't like it, I didn't eat it and I would skip meals. That's why toast became important to me, if you could do something and get a slice of toast it was great – it was a reward from senior boys, chiefs or deputies for polishing their shoes or such. They were given toasters due to their seniority. The occasional meal was good but it was generally awful. The smell of toast from the chiefs room was salivating.
51. The chiefs were in charge of serving. If you didn't like something the boy sitting next to you would probably eat it. You weren't forced to eat it. We were being asked to eat things we didn't really like. There was no choice, it was take it or leave it. For



breakfast you would get eggs and bacon or cornflakes. Lunch was a two course meal and at tea time you had a main course and bread and butter. So, on the face of it, you were getting three regular meals a day.

52. The whole school ate lunch together, including all the masters. Breakfast and tea time was just the boarders and weekly boarders. Day pupils made up a third of the school. At weekends it was just the full boarders, so again another third of the school would drop off. It was a pretty Spartan regime. Teachers sat at their own table. One of the jobs of a deputy would be to serve the masters. I have no recollection of bullying around mealtimes, only that the food was horrible and not wanting to eat it.
53. There was a tuck shop and you would get some of your money to use at that. It was open after mealtimes, before prep and after lunch before classes. Boys would serve in there. There were crisps and sweets. I'd use it regularly because I didn't like the food.

#### *Washing / bathing*

54. My recollection was there was never hot water. I was a particularly shy boy. I liked my own privacy, but the showers were communal as well as the baths. Nobody ever had a bath. The showers were always stinking. I hated showering with other people. As a result I tried to stay clean. I was a winger at rugby and tried not to get dirty so that I wouldn't have to have a shower.
55. We used a public swimming pool in Dumbarton, the Brock Baths. We would walk down and often the locals would throw stones at us and it was horrible. It was always really hot and the changing rooms were round the outside of the pool and I hated having to get changed to go into the pool. For me the removal of my sense of myself and my own identity, the lack of choice or privacy, was the hardest part.
56. Mason House had the changing facilities for the away teams when we played rugby, so in second or third year, often we would have to wait until they had gone before we got changed and the hot water had been used. I didn't play much sport when I was

younger, largely because I didn't want to get dirty. As I got older I enjoyed sport and played in the first fifteen in fifth and sixth year.

57. There were two banks of four showers in New House. The toilets were always stinking. I don't know if it was the drains. To think your parents are paying for you to live in that barbaric existence, even at weekends.

*Clothing / uniform*

58. The uniform was grey shorts, my mother thought it was a great thing because she thought if I wore long trousers I would go through the knee and nobody would be there to darn them for me. So it was grey shorts, green socks, green jumper and grey shirt. At weekends when we went to church or rugby we travelled in kilts. I played rugby. We were well known for travelling around Scotland in our kilts. It projected a very regimented profile. I was given the same tartan of kilt my father had. Often when I told people in later life that I went to Keil they would remember the kilts.
59. There was a trunk room at the school. You had a trunk and we went to Paisley's outfitters, in Jamaica Street, Glasgow, which is now gone. You went there with a list of stuff and they stocked items for these schools. So you would get a school jumper, socks and a blazer and the anything else on the list. Of course I got some hand downs from my brother. The school kindly gave me the same number as my brother had so my parents didn't need to buy new name tags. It was packed into your trunk. My number was [REDACTED] Your school tag had your name and number on it, your peg had it on it. *School*
60. I was never great at any sport, but was good at most, so in sixth year I played sport most of the time and not a lot academically. That in itself was a huge mistake, there was no-one to guide me or advise me. As an aside, there was a film on channel four in the early eighties called, 'Good and bad at games'. It was about boarding schools existence. It summed it up for me. The cruelty of some boys. In my first year there were two or three boys who were different from the rest and they were picked on and bullied by the whole year. In that film there was a boy that got called 'Animal', who

was treated barbarically and I could recognise that. There was a boy who wasn't particularly bright who was captain of the cricket team and the first fifteen. He was lauded up to be the king of the school and the film followed their development into later life. The sports boy hadn't amounted to much and the boy who was the 'animal' had carried the trauma of what happened to him into later life and was trying to exact revenge culminating in him attacking the sports boy at an old boys event. It just summed it up to me.

61. The school's reputation was built on sport. They were proud of the academic achievement, one of the boys in my year got to Oxford and we all climbed up Ben Lomond to celebrate that. But it wasn't any more celebrated than the sporting achievement. There was a special pair of socks you were given to wear if you played more than five times for the first fifteen and you were lauded like a successful gladiator. Cricket was not treated the same. We played table tennis against a variety of teams, adult teams, and we regularly won the league. When I was twelve or thirteen and had nothing much to do at weekends, I often played table tennis from nine in the morning until eleven o'clock at night.
62. Staff did little except teaching and supervising sport. The standard of teaching was woeful, and you think people are going to boarding school to pay for a better education. It's absolute nonsense. There were one or two good teachers but the standard was woeful. I'm more aware of it now, but the teachers couldn't engage with the pupils.
63. What happens to you as a child dictates your outcomes as an adult. We know this through studies, and the trauma you carry as a child, you can carry through the rest of your life. Therefore we talk a lot about adverse childhood experiences and people who go into gangs do it because their family don't take proper care of them. Their parents aren't able to guide them and advise them and they gravitate into gangs because that's the first family they've ever had. I talk about the particular role of teachers because they may be the first stable adult role model that a child gets and they must recognise this role and help to shape the lives of people. At Keil they were

largely absent. They had such an opportunity to be a positive role model. Apart from two or three of them they just didn't understand their role in developing pupils.

64. It was more about their inability to engage with the pupils. The French master was atrocious. But we're talking about a time when a lot of these guys had come through the second world war. There were two teachers that I'm sure were going through PTSD, what they used to call shell shock. They weren't equipped to be teachers but they were there teaching and our parents were paying for it.

*Leisure time*

65. Sometimes they would put things on for us at weekends, like they would show a movie in the gym hall. There was a scripture union thing they would let you go down to in Dumbarton on a Saturday night. You were allowed to wear your own clothes to that, jeans and t-shirts.
66. We had no leisure time early on, it was very regimented. As you got older you had more time, you are doing Highers so you're not doing as many subjects. We would gravitate back to the bedroom and have a chat, a coffee and a bit of toast. In the summer we would go down to the pitches and play football and such like. The scripture union was open to you to go to the local leisure centre. There were kids there from other schools. That was ok.
67. We played rugby every Saturday morning and sometimes we would travel quite a distance to play. Some days that would take up a lot of day. My brother was in [REDACTED] and on a couple of occasions I took permissions to go up and see him. He would take me to a football match or something. That was really my escape. I have a recollection of permissions being withdrawn from some boys. I never had that. There was the Duke of Edinburgh award when you got a bit older, second and third year. You could go away and I would go mountaineering a couple of times.

*Trips / Holidays*

68. During the holidays I would go back to [REDACTED]. My dad worked [REDACTED] all day. Mother was a touch typist and would take in work from various businesses. My sister would spend most of the time with my grandmother who lived nearby. I was left to my own devices. I would play football in the garden as if I was playing against other people but it was just me. I spent a lot of time doing that during the holidays.
69. Between first and second year I went on a scripture union camp in the north of Scotland. There were kids there from other boarding schools and I really enjoyed that. On my second year my maiden aunt, my dad's sister took me for the week. In fifth year I went skiing with the school to Italy for the week but that's all I really remember in relation to trips.
70. We didn't have family holidays in the summer [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] We would get a week's holiday in October to Wales or something like that.
71. I had long periods of solitude not talking to anybody. My brother came home from [REDACTED] but he would get a job, so he was out working. I was never particularly close to him either. If I had gone to school in [REDACTED] I'd have had friends and I'd have been with them. I'd have been fine. Boys came and went at Keil. There was very few of us that went through the whole six years, so I had no close friends. I made strong friendships in sixth year. It was really only fifth and sixth year you would keep in contact with each other during school holidays.
72. I started playing for the local rugby team in [REDACTED]. They were really struggling for players at the time, so I would often use my connections with former pupils to bring players in. But there was no long lasting, enduring friendships like other people have had.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

73. My parents came one birthday, my thirteenth, with a cake, lemonade and crisps. This was in my first year at Keil. During the other years I would get a birthday card, that was about it. When I was eighteen my parents came and got me and took me to a restaurant in Glasgow. I went home for Christmas.

*Religious Instruction*

74. On a Sunday, full boarders had to go to church. So you wandered down in your kilts. It was a Church of Scotland church. Catholics went to a convent church across the road. The Iranian and Chinese boys went to the convent because they weren't Church of Scotland but they were not Catholic so this wasn't given much thought.

*Personal possessions*

75. You had your uniform and your own non regulation clothes. I had my own table tennis bat, which was my proudest possession. You collected your laundry at the end of term and took it home.

*Visits / Inspections*

76. I used to write home at prep. There was one telephone and you could use that. Very often you had to stand in a queue to use it. I didn't phone home that often but it annoyed my parents when I did because I had no money and I'd reverse the charges, so I was discouraged from doing that. The telephone was in the corridor, there was no privacy, other boys would be standing next to you waiting to use it. I didn't really write that often either.
77. I remember vividly that occasion on my thirteenth birthday when my parents came with a birthday cake, a crate of lemonade and crisps. I was so shocked that they had done that, I hadn't expected it. I was feted like a king that night by everyone in the

house. I was so proud of them. It was the one thing they did in my whole first year that made me feel special. That has lived with me as well.

78. I had my term time broken up by my parents coming and a couple of times taking me out to Helensburgh for something to eat or going [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and seeing my brother, or one weekend being picked up and going back to [REDACTED]. You had one overnight permission a term and a couple to go out at weekends.
79. My parents did come to the school but it was a rarity getting a visit. Dad ran his business and was very active in the church. A couple of times a term they would go to Glasgow on a Sunday afternoon and [REDACTED] then come [REDACTED] and visit me or vice versa.
80. I remember there were never any inspectors that came into the school. As well as this I remember when we joined the European union. There were people who came and gave us special lessons on the European union membership and how great it was for Britain. Ironic now. When I was in sixth year, Loretto school in Edinburgh were having a lot of problems and they sent a team through to see our regime and see if there were things they could copy. I remember them arriving to do that. That's the only time I remember external visitors of any nature.
81. You got school reports for whatever worth they were. You took them home at school holidays, gave them to your parents and everything in the garden was rosy. Punishments weren't recorded in these reports. There was no punishment book. There was no rule book.

### *Healthcare*

82. There was matron and her assistant, who was a little old lady. If you weren't feeling well you reported to sick bay. It was a mini dormitory with six beds in it and a television, which worked a bit better than the one in the dorm. The matron would get your food for you while you were in sick bay.

83. There was a flu epidemic in my first or second year and most of us that got it were sent home and I remember being sent home. That's the only time I remember being ill. Apart from that I was a healthy child apart from potentially being malnourished.
84. Matron, Miss Simpson, had a flat in the school so if there were any minor injuries she would see you. You could also go to the sick bay before classes in the morning if there was something not right. She was just a kind old lady and her assistant was even older. The assistant's name was wee Aggie. I would be surprised if she didn't know about the punishments and the slipperings but she had grown up in that regime, she'd been there for years. She knew the names of pupils who had been there twenty years before. She will be long dead now. In hindsight, if anything had been reported to her about abuse I think she would have done something. The thing was, there was a culture there that you just didn't say anything to anyone.

*Running away*

85. Of all the scandals there it was often because of boys running away. It wasn't a frequent thing. I can remember about half a dozen times when boys ran away. I was aware of it happening but it wasn't a common thing. I didn't run away.

*Isolation*

86. At weekends, day pupils and weekday boarders would go home and some full boarders may have had permissions. So there could be just five or six of you there. Everybody would do their own thing. I spent most of my weekends myself. I would play table tennis against a wall on these occasions, or I would wander round the grounds. I spent a lot of time on my own. When I left school and went home for holidays it was the same, I was on my own. My mum and dad [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So from the age of twelve to fifteen I was on my own. There were occasions when a few of us would play together, French cricket or table tennis but it was not that common to have company.



87. My best friend [REDACTED] came to [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] when we were in primary four or five and he knew nobody. He lived just around the corner and we hit it off right from the start. We were inseparable during summer holidays. That was cut away from me, I didn't have it any more. The first time I went home I went to see [REDACTED] a couple of times but it wasn't the same. We didn't have anything in common anymore. He knew different people. He had taken up golf and had new friends, so I ended up on my own.

*Foreign pupils*

88. In second year we started getting boys from South Africa, Botswana and Rhodesia. The school was struggling to survive at that time and they were picking people up by targeting embassies. So these boys wouldn't go home. They would tend to stay with relations in the United Kingdom. There was one boy from Rhodesia who was staying with a granny in Drumchapel during the holidays. I think most of the boys would have connections with Scotland in some way. There were two boys with the surname [REDACTED] who were from Italian origin but came from Rhodesia or Zambia.
89. I don't know what happened to the Chinese or Iranian boys during the holidays. I once took one of the Iranian boys home with me. There was one Iraqi boy at the school and on one occasion the Iranians got the Iraqi boy against a wall and assaulted him and spat on him. At that time there was a lot of violence between the two countries.

**Discipline & abuse at Keil School, Dumbarton**

90. From a discipline point of view there were two systems that ran. One was the accepted system that the school recognised. The second one was an unofficial system of punishment which the school turned a blind eye to. This went on throughout my whole time at the school although the unofficial system had been dying out – it was rife when I arrived.

91. The official discipline was laid down by the chiefs and it was called the 'copy'. If you received a 'copy' you had to go and report to your housemaster. At New House that wasn't easy because you had to go and seek him out. At Mason House or Isla Kerr the housemaster lived there, so you could knock on his door. You would tell them you got a copy and what it was for and they would give you a piece of lined A4 paper with their signature on it. You then had to go away and copy out a poem without mistakes in your best handwriting, in my time it was 'If' by Rudyard Kipling. You had to write that out in long hand in your best writing without any mistakes and hand it back to them within three days. You would get a 'copy' for things like your bed being in a mess, dirty shoes, being late for breakfast or talking during prep. Any stupid reason, you could think of a multitude of silly reasons why a chief might take it upon himself to give you a 'copy'.
92. If you got three 'copies' in a week you were belted. Deputies could only give you one copy but a chief could think your heinous offence was so bad you would get a double copy. So on Monday you could get a double copy for having your bed in a mess and you were walking on egg shells the rest of the week in case you got another then you'd get belted. Your bed could be in a mess for no fault of your own – maybe others had been jumping on it – but it was your fault with no right of appeal.
93. On a Thursday night, after banking, <sup>QQY</sup> [REDACTED] would come and give the belt to anyone who had three copies. Everyone would stand at the end of their bed in their dressing gown and slippers and you would be called forward to receive the belt in front of your peers. Another thing about <sup>QQY</sup> [REDACTED] was that he had an unfortunate genetic thing and had a lot of spittle around his mouth. So when he belted you, spittle would fly all over the place. It was horrible and he would get really worked up. On one occasion, I can't remember what we were supposed to have done, but something had gone wrong in the dorm and the chief, [REDACTED], had got very angry. He decided all twenty-four of us were getting belted. So <sup>QQY</sup> [REDACTED] came in with his gown on, which he didn't often wear, foaming at the mouth, screaming at us all for how bad we had been and proceeded to give us all the belt, even though some of us hadn't done anything. I just remember how cruel and barbaric this was. If anyone had done this to my children I would be right through the door of the school. I

had nobody to turn to. I couldn't tell my parents as they held the school in such high regard, I didn't want to shatter their illusions. So I just lived with it. The collective punishment only happened once, but that night has lived with me all my life. The fear of knowing I was next, the injustice of it, and it was cruel and unnecessary.

94. In my school days I got the belt about half a dozen times and, to my mind, I didn't deserve it once – actually which child deserves to be belted in such a way?. On no occasion was it fair or justified. It was brutal. I wasn't a particularly clean little boy, so I picked up copies left, right and centre. I spent most of my week trying not to get another copy not to get belted. That night when we all got belted stood out to me most of my life. It was so barbaric.
95. We also had an unofficial punishment scheme, which was known as 'the peech'. Senior boys would give out the peech, which entailed them taking a slipper to your backside. Sometimes they would use something far bigger than a carpet slipper, and that happened far too regularly. If they couldn't be bothered giving you a copy you got the peech. I was told something but I never experienced this and it could just be a tale but there was a boy at school who left all of a sudden and I was told he was 'peeched' with a running spike. Whether that actually happened or not, I don't know, but that level of cruelty existed. Teachers knew it was happening and the headmaster knew it was happening and they turned a blind eye to it.
96. If the punishment was in relation to copies it was always on Thursday nights after banking and everybody in the dorm was always present. There were masters who gave the belt at school for boys misbehaving in class, but that was the time. I had that in primary school too. At Keil it was done in the masters common room or in the corridor. The funny thing was you never tended to get copies after second year. It was really something they inflicted on first and second year boys. It was the little boys that were treated so badly. I don't know if the thought behind it was to break them into the discipline. QQY used the tawse, a two fingered leather belt. Some teachers never belted at all, but those who did used the tawse. You put your two hands together, palms up. Sometimes his aim was off and he missed your hand and hit you over the wrist. After you got it your hands would be red, but sometimes the

red marks were on the wrists. It never exceeded six. Sometimes two or three but generally it was six.

97. The older boys did grotesque punishments to you. There was one where you put your hand flat on the desk and they would take a sharp compass out and run it through your fingers. There was another one where they'd take a wooden duster from the blackboard and hit you across the knuckles. There was one where they would take a wooden ruler and bacon slice your backside or slam it up and down near your finger as if they're going to hit you and occasionally they caught you. I lost the nail from the middle finger of my right hand because of that one. I told my mother I got my fingers caught in the door. I can't remember the name of the boy who did this.
98. There were a number of cruel and unusual punishments. It would generally be chiefs who did it. So what would happen is, at the end of every school day at six o'clock you would go for tea and then between quarter to seven and half past eight you would have prep. Prep is when you did your homework. You would go back to class to do this and it was supervised by a chief or a deputy. Essentially you had a whole class in this room with a boy sitting in front of them maintaining order. Sometimes they would get bored and do some of the cruel, barbaric things to get them through the day.
99. I used to hate prep because you never got any work done, everybody was misbehaving and the way things were meted out for the amusement of the senior boys was unjust. No adult supervised prep. I think a master was on duty in the common room if you required him, but they never came into the classroom to give you advice or support. I can't emphasise enough that the boys ran the school. That was the regime and everything that happened was at the behest of senior boys. The teachers knew it was happening.
100. About the time I was in sixth year they were starting to stop the peech, around the arrival of Widdowson, about 1978 -1980. It certainly wasn't as common as it had been, but in the early days it was very common. When I was twelve the boys who

were seventeen and eighteen played rugby. At that time our school was probably the top rugby school in Scotland, the boys who were chiefs and deputies, to me they were men. They were massive. So being hit by these fit young men was sore. To me I was being hit by a man. It was humiliating and cruel. It was a slipper or a training shoe on the backside. I had my bum bacon sliced with a wooden ruler on one occasion. I can remember other people saying they were hit with other things. That is all hearsay. I never witnessed that. I was hit fairly regularly by them. Generally for being untidy or being late. Trivial issues, not having washed your hands, things like that. Some things you'd get a copy for, but if they couldn't be bothered you got the peech.

101. On one occasion, I remember vaguely one of my duties in first term was to be an orderly to one of the deputies. So that meant I ran his errands and made his bed. In prison they had a regime where the currency was cigarettes, in Keil the currency was toast. So the senior boys were given a toaster and a loaf of bread and they would say, "If you do this for me I'll give you a slice of toast". This was great when you were coming into a dorm hungry and tired. So I was an orderly and I had a jotter. The deputy's name was [REDACTED]. He got called [REDACTED]. I was so immature then and someone drew what I thought was a Mexican sombrero on my jotter. I was called down to his room to ask why I had a penis and balls drawn on my jotter and was I taking the mickey out of him. I genuinely thought it was a Mexican hat, so because of that he thought I was taking the mickey and I got the peech.
102. Rightfully that form of punishment is gone and should never have been there in the first place. No child should have been subjected to that. The fear and humiliation round about that, that you felt as an individual can't be underestimated.
103. You wouldn't go to the matron and say you'd been belted, you just accepted it and waited on your sores to heal. I have witnessed other boys being belted. I can't recall witnessing others being slippered, but I know it happened. You would hold on to the metal end of the bed and the chief would thump you.

104. My parents wouldn't have been surprised with the discipline system. My father would have gone through something similar. They thought the chief system was fantastic. [REDACTED] a chief and he had gone on to university and done very well and they had put it down to character building. You wouldn't tell them of the punishment you received, the fear that you had. It was a form of bullying and torture that was allowed to exist. You wouldn't tell anyone and you weren't allowed to talk about it.
105. Bullying happened and I look back in shame for not doing anything about it. There were two boys in particular, [REDACTED], who left school after second year I think, and [REDACTED], who went on to sixth year. They were just different. [REDACTED] was given the name [REDACTED], and he lived with that for six years at school. He wasn't treated as badly as [REDACTED] but he really suffered solitude and isolation all the time. Some of the boys tied [REDACTED] to his bed and locked him in his locker. [REDACTED] was given a horrendous time, and he had nobody to go to, no-one to run to. Thankfully for him, he was a weekly boarder and went home at weekends. I look back on those things with shame. He must have hated coming back on a Sunday night.
106. There's a boy, I'm friends with him on Facebook, called [REDACTED]. He came to us in second year. His father was in the military as far as I recall. At roll call that very first night, the senior chief for that year was reading out the names to make sure everyone was back and he shouted out, [REDACTED]. He then said, "I'm not shouting that out every roll call, it's far too long". He looked at him, and [REDACTED] was taller than us for that age and the senior chief said, "You look like a [REDACTED] son". He got called [REDACTED] the rest of his school life, even at roll calls. Even fellow pupils called him that. How cruel and unfair was that. He must carry that trauma.
107. I wasn't a deputy when I reached fifth year. In sixth year I was actually chief of [REDACTED] House. I had responsibility the first and second year boys. I went out of my way to make sure they didn't suffer some of the stuff I suffered. The boys in sixth year used to gather in my room, off the dormitory, because it was the closest to School House but away from it. The headmaster hated that we gathered in a group. Around early 1980, I was really ill with flu and I was confined to bed. One of the boys

that I didn't particularly get on with, [REDACTED], was over and he peed a boy in my dormitory. It's the first time I had seen it done in years, well I didn't even see it, I was told about it – I had been in bed. The boy who was slipped ran away and his parents complained to the school. As a result I was hauled in to the headmaster's office, with the flu, where he threatened to expel me for letting this happen, although I didn't know it happened until after the event. He brought up the fact that everyone gathered in my room as if we were plotting revolution, it was an opportunity to get a lot of frustration off his chest. I was really unwell and upset about this.

108. My housemaster came to see me later that week saying it was all resolved and there would be no further punishment as they realised I hadn't been involved. . I never got an apology of any kind for the headmasters behaviour and threats. . It had nothing to do with me as I had been in bed with flu and I found that very unjust. I tried to protect my kids from that and by that time it was dying out anyway. It was the only time I heard of it happening in my sixth year and it was me that got the blame for it for a while. The boy who did it was one of the few in sixth year who hadn't been made a chief. Nothing happened to him regarding the incident.

### **Leaving Keil School, Dumbarton**

109. I left school in 1980. During my time in the police I learned how to study for the first time, I never had a study process or regime at school, and I got on the police accelerated promotion programme. I was told at that time, through various tests I did that I had the IQ of an honours graduate. What Keil didn't do was bring that out in me, so I was allowed to drift academically. If I had been home I don't think that would have been the case. I love sport and I went back to school to do three other Highers, but really to play for the first fifteen and the cricket eleven and [REDACTED] the table tennis team. It's really sad now to think of it, that those were the most important things in my life.
110. I didn't get qualifications to go to university and joined the bank when I left school [REDACTED] I can't emphasise enough this is the big motivator for me in coming forward to the inquiry, the fact that I went to boarding school changed

my whole life. I love my sister with all my heart but I had no relationship with the rest of my family. We were just people that happened to live together. My dad was always working. I'm sure it was a loving household but I just didn't feel it.

### **Life after being in care**

111. I stumbled into the bank because I needed to get a job. I worked at the Clydesdale bank for five years before I joined the police. I spent thirty-one years there and it is the best thing I ever did and my whole career has been in policing. I was a couple of years working for a homeless charity when I left the police before taking the job I do now, which is with the [REDACTED]. I have no regrets about my life. I've gained a lot of experience and made some lifelong friends. However, I still think I had a bad start and it's down to going to boarding school.
112. When I left school I had extreme difficulty around young ladies. I could never find a way to speak to women. I'd never been around women, never went to school with girls. As a result I ended up marrying my first proper girlfriend. I think to a certain extent it's down to the fact that I never thought I'd find anyone else. [REDACTED] had significant mental health issues and ended up taking her own life, which was tragic. She was bi-polar. I ended up being mother and father to my three children, who have a bit of trauma from their mum's time. I could see a similar social awkwardness in former school colleagues after we left.
113. I met [REDACTED], who was absolutely magnificent. She had four of her own children and her marriage had broken up. We ended up together and we have a very stable family relationship with seven children. They are all carrying a variety of traumas that [REDACTED] and I have addressed in our own humble way. We are close and I have a very close relationship with all my children and some of that is because I wouldn't let them have the kind of distant relationship I'd had growing up.
114. I've never regretted marrying [REDACTED], we had three wonderful children. I suddenly found a girl who liked me for who I was and recognised qualities in me. I'd never had that before so I married her. We married when we were twenty-three. If I'd had a



more stable upbringing I wouldn't have rushed head long into it the way I did but then I wouldn't have had my children.

### **Impact**

115. I have never sought help. I've had various thoughts at various times on how it's impacted on me.. I don't think I need support in any way. I'm a pretty resilient individual and able to analyse things myself. When we talk about adverse childhood experiences in my work life it's about things that happen to you as a child that can have a major impact on your outcomes as an adult, it's an [REDACTED], we also talk about resilience and personal coping mechanisms. There are ten adverse childhood experiences. If you have four or more you are more likely to struggle and have a problem or two in your life, end up in jail, addiction to drink or drugs etc.. Some people can have one bad experience and it has a continued bad effect on their lives – it doesn't have to be four. Everyone's resilience is different and it resilience helps you cope with your trauma....I think my personal resilience is pretty strong. I have a real understanding of that. I have a strong family group. I'm ok.
116. I've always had a simmering resentment that my ability wasn't brought out of me. My parents always looked on me as the dumb one of the family because my brother was academically excellent and I wasn't. I left school with three Highers but not enough to get to university. I have a simmering resentment that the school didn't bring out my academic ability. They were quite happy for me to turn out on the sports field, that's what was important. To me this character building and stiff upper lip sort of thing at boarding schools is a lot of nonsense.
117. What I have an issue with is this thought that if you went to boarding school your trauma isn't on the same scale as people from other care settings. This is really unfair.

## Reporting of Abuse

118. I didn't report any of the abuse. It was everyday life and it wasn't out of the norm. The way in which we were disciplined and given the belt, which today seems horrific, wasn't that long ago that that was standard practice in schools. We all grew up with that. There were some teachers who took great delight in doing it. I remember standing outside the [REDACTED] teacher's door<sup>CDK</sup> [REDACTED] for two hours waiting to be punished for something. It was the anticipation of getting punished. He deliberately drew that out. I can't remember if I was belted on that occasion or whatever it was, but there was an element of cruelty about that. But that was of its day. I hope teachers don't behave in that way now.
119. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. It has now been taken over [REDACTED] and it's been rolled out into [REDACTED] local authorities and it distinctly covers some of these areas about reporting things and not being a by-stander. The problem we have is, [REDACTED] rolling it out it doesn't touch the private schools. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who developed the programme, has been present in a couple of private schools, delivering the programme, to specifically deal with bullying in boarding schools, which I think is quite important. One of the things I'm saying is that they should all be getting some programme [REDACTED] to ensure that all children across the country have the same information regarding violence they may face and other social issues – boarding schools/private schools shouldn't be omitted.
120. Another thing is, it has been expressed to me [REDACTED] that we shouldn't be going there because they are privileged kids. That belief of privilege goes right across public opinion, even to the policy makers, and what I'm trying to describe to the Inquiry is the children there aren't privileged. They have no choice. Their parents have paid for them to go there and they are on their own. We should think of the poor little twelve year old boy that needs support rather than the fact that the parents might have money the money to send them to a 'better school'..

## **Lessons to be Learned**

121. There should be safe spaces. The world has changed dramatically from then. [REDACTED] do a lot of work on that, giving people the skills to tackle issues around childhood and violence. Case in point, you will know the case of Bailey Gwynne in Aberdeen, who tragically got killed in the school playground. There were thirty pupils at the school who knew the boy that did it had a knife. They just didn't know what to do with that information. It's that same ethos as a child. What do you do with that? Who do we tell? So we do a lot of training with schools now to try and equip pupils with the understanding that they can say 'No'. It is ok to tell an adult and prevent a tragedy.
122. We've got to recognise we're talking about the 1970's and the twenty-first century is different. Back then you had nowhere to go and you had this culture of secrecy. Therefore I'm not blaming people for not doing anything about it because they didn't really know what to do. We have to equip people to call out bullying.
123. I don't know what boarding schools are like now, but children between eight and twelve years old need love and care and nurturing. Children need a cuddle, I did, and a mother's love. I didn't have it and it needs to be recognised. Don't let children live in isolation.

## **Other information**

124. I don't know if the Inquiry are aware of the attachment theory, but that nurturing thing you get from your parents is so important and people struggle if they don't get it. This is a theory that grew up in the fifties. Lack of attachment destabilises you emotionally. So you're spending the rest of your life looking for a particular person you can stabilise with or forming relationships built on your early lack of attachment – leading to numerous broken relationships etc. I recognised all that in me, largely because of my upbringing and largely because of the abnormal way I grew up at boarding school. There will be lots of people like that and it breeds insecurity. We used to call it stiff upper lip and being British but really we are emotionally retarded.

125. That doesn't take me away from the care system and all the trauma they have gone through and I've talked about children that we've spoken to who have descended into criminality because of the way they have been brought up. Boarding school life is not like that. It's a different type of problem, but it's a system that is cruel and unnatural and leaves many with significant trauma, which should be equally recognised.
126. For me, if I was writing a section in the Inquiry report I would be challenging the stiff upper lip and the character building ethos of boarding school existence. I still think a lot of people think that's what it is, and actually it's a destabiliser more than anything else. It creates emotional barriers for people.
127. It's the emotional damage it did to me. It's trying to paint a picture of a very sensitive twelve year old boy who wasn't allowed to grow up how he wanted to grow up, who wanted to be supported and encouraged and loved and my parents paid for that. It was senior boys that were allowed to run Keil. If you're going to do that they will treat you like animals and that's what they did. It was allowed to happen. It was neglectful, it was barbaric. It was just the regime that was wrong. The regime was unfair.
128. I spoke to [REDACTED] about this, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I met him for lunch and we'd never talked about this and I told him I was speaking to the Inquiry and he told me he had been sexually abused in his first four weeks at Keil. An older boy had grabbed him by the genitals on a couple of occasions. He started crying. He had never told anybody about that. I never experienced anything like that but [REDACTED] had, so it did go on.
129. 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. That said, I would require it to be significantly redacted before publication and I should wish to approve the redactions.

JPA  


Signed.....

Dated..... 20 August 2020