

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FHQ
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is ^{FHQ} [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1944. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I qualified as a Clinical Psychologist in 1967. I worked in the National Health Service (NHS) for most of the years following until I retired from the NHS at sixty years of age. For most of my career [REDACTED] Child and Family Clinical Psychology Service in the Argyll and Clyde Health Board. I was [REDACTED] on the Glasgow University Clinical Psychology course.
3. I always worked part-time in the NHS, in a Child and Adolescent Mental Health team (CAMHS). When you work with children, you work with their families as well. I also developed my own private practice working with children and adults. I frequently became involved in legal cases where children were involved.

Loretto School

As a parent of children at the school

4. I didn't have any connection with Loretto, apart from various friends having sent their children there. When my husband and I decided our oldest child had to change

schools, Loretto was one of the schools that we went to visit. Loretto was the school that my husband, myself and our son, decided that he would like to go to. Our [REDACTED] children all subsequently boarded at Loretto and were at the school over a number of years.

5. I think that any parent, from time to time, has an occasional concern. When my husband and I did have concerns, we approached the school and they took appropriate action. For example, my [REDACTED] children went to Loretto, at their request, [REDACTED] They went to different houses. [REDACTED] phoned to say his housemaster had said he could go into the housemaster's study at any time to phone home and keep himself comfortable. [REDACTED] phoned to say that his housemaster had said he couldn't phone home for three weeks. To me, that was a very old-fashioned view. I didn't think it was sensible. My son had used the payphone in the common room to phone home.

6. I got on to the headmaster [REDACTED] and said this was ridiculous, that the school had an inconsistent message [REDACTED]. It was tackled. The headmaster assured me that he would speak to all the housemasters and make sure there was a common policy for new entrants to the school. I didn't have any qualms about going to the top to alert the school to a difficulty.

Role as a Governor

7. Before I became a Governor, my involvement with the school was solely as a parent. I wasn't ever on the Board when my children were at Loretto. I was asked almost immediately after my last child had left and I think it was the following year that I went on the Board. I became a Governor around 1999 and served on the Board for about ten years. There were around sixteen Governors. I have kept no records from my time as Governor. I am vague about some things because a lot of time has passed and I was doing a huge amount of other things at the same time I was a Governor. Being a Governor was a small part of what I was doing at the time.

8. When I was recruited as a Governor, I was phoned initially by the then Chairman of the Board, Graeme Simmers. He asked if I would become a Governor. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I then spoke to Lord Johnston who took over from Graeme Simmers. Lord Johnston and I had a lot of mutual friends. We weren't particularly friendly but we knew who each other were. I knew various Governors on the Board when I went on it and one in particular was a close friend.
9. At that time, there was a policy that only Old Lorettonians could be Governor. They had some women on the Board. However the women Old Lorettonians could only be young women because they only started having girls in the school about ten years earlier. Lord Johnston had felt these younger women might be intimidated by the older gentlemen who made up the Board. The Governors wanted an experienced woman to come on the Board. They felt my professional experience might be of value in potentially difficult, problem areas. I've no doubt I was asked, in a major part, because of my career.
10. Lord Johnston asked me to be as open or critical as I felt was necessary. He said not to be nervous about challenging anybody and assured me of his complete support. Lord Johnston said he would not always agree with me but the Board wanted me to be upfront with what I was thinking. The past housemistress had also been made a Governor. She had gone to job in the south and I don't recall her ever being at a meeting. Other than myself, the former housemistress and, briefly, another woman [REDACTED] the other Board members were all Old Lorettonians.
11. I do not know whether references were sought or other checks made. I had not provided professional advice to the Board before I went on it. I assume I was responsible to the Chairman and the Board as a whole. I recall no training.
12. The Board of Governors met three or four times a year at the school. The Board were informed about all that was going on and what the issues were. When there were major decisions to be made, the Board would be presented with the arguments for and

against particular courses of action that the school wanted to take. The Governor's role was to take an interest and provide an external input to the way the school was operated, from someone who was concerned about the school. All of the Governors had connections to Loretto and had the school's well-being at heart. That's why they were on the Board. Governors had a range of expertise to bring to the table and there were lawyers, accountants and money men.

The Management Committee

13. On becoming a Governor I quickly became a member of the smaller group of Governors who formed the Management Committee. There were about seven or eight people on the committee. It was made up of the Headmaster, the Clerk to the Board of Governors ^{PYK} [REDACTED] the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and three or four Governors. The Committee met on a monthly basis and were far more involved in all the decision making and issues that arose. Those meetings were at the New Club in Edinburgh or at the school.
14. There were always a lot of discussions at the committee meetings about finance because the finances of schools are extremely complicated and tricky. There were emerging difficulties with funding at the time I went on the Board. A film director went to the papers with descriptions of what had happened to him at Loretto and that was discussed. I can't remember the director's name or when that came to light. We discussed how the school were going to cope with it. We discussed setting up the Golf Academy, academic results and anything that related to issues in school life.

As Care and Welfare Governor

15. I was probably the first Care and Welfare Governor. I don't remember when the Care and Welfare part became part of my role. I regarded my role as Care and Welfare Governor as part of my role as a Governor. I hoped to be able to bring my professional experience into play when considering child welfare within the school.

16. I did not receive any induction or training. It was up to me to flag up welfare issues which may not have been familiar to all the Board members. I was not supervised, other than discussion with the Chairman and other Board members. I'm sure, at the time, I would have been shown the school's paperwork about child welfare and protection but I haven't kept any of that. I read through what the school had in place but, what the content of that was, now I would not be able to tell you. The Governors got a huge amount of written information from the school, particularly before any Board meeting.
17. I had intermittent contact with some pupils, parents and staff. On a number of occasions, parents who had concerns had discussions with me at their request. I tried to help resolve any issues. I had little direct contact with the pupils as a whole. I was working full-time in the West of Scotland.
18. By the time I was a Governor, I wasn't concerned about the access staff and others had to the boarding houses. I had been concerned as a parent about what I thought, at the time, was an over-relaxed attitude to access. It wasn't anything to do with abuse. It was more to do with boys and girls in their late teens mingling, with what I considered to be a lack of supervision. By the time I became a Governor that had changed dramatically. There were far stricter rules about when the boys could visit the girls' houses and which part of the house the boys could go to. It was the same for the girls visiting the boys' houses, although they didn't do that nearly as much, I don't think. As time went on, girls came in to the school from the age of thirteen. All of those requirements for supervision were tackled and were very clear.
19. Any concerns I had about the boarding houses, I expressed when necessary. There were no major concerns that I recall. During the time I served there was a widespread recognition of the need for child protection. A counselling service existed and, perhaps more importantly, the students spent much more time at home at the weekends than they had done in the past.
20. The counsellors came on board when I was a Governor. A couple of counsellors came into the school. The children could access the counselling service, which was

confidential. I didn't introduce or review any such arrangements. I didn't have any reason to think the counselling service was not sufficient. I didn't propose any changes to it or monitor use of it. I wasn't in a position to do that. I'm not sure whether there was a counselling service or not, when my children were at school.

21. There was a clinical psychologist, who had also been a parent, who provided services. These were confidential so I wasn't party to what their issues were. The amount on offer to the children was increased. The children could also see the school doctor. I knew him very well. The school doctor was an extremely nice man, who also was a parent. He was very approachable and very well-liked by all the pupils.
22. I suggested that each house have a nominated Governor who should take a particular interest in the goings-on in that house and report back what their findings were. Some Governors were more engaged with this than others. It is difficult because all the Governors are voluntary contributors to the ethos of the school. The Governors were all working people, living all over the country and coming together for Board meetings three or four times a year.
23. I didn't feel I had to make any policy changes. What was clear, through the time I was on the Board, was that there was a gradual evolution in how children were treated and regarded. In the country as a whole, say in terms of child abuse, there was a sea change in how aware people had to be about abuse and about the essential requirement of how seriously any complaints, brought to the attention of any member of the staff, had to be listened to. I do not recollect any formal involvement with external agencies such as the Care Inspectorate or the Care Commission.
24. My role as Governor of Care and Welfare did not change in the period between 1999 and 2006. I gave up the role when I felt I had become too old for it. You lose touch with what's going on. When I first went on the Board, with my children having just left school, I had a lot of contacts with other parents and my children knew lots of other children. I didn't use that to do any snooping but I had lots of avenues of hearing officially and unofficially about what was going on in the school. That was very useful.

There was also a huge amount of commitment in time, money and energy to go, once a month, through to East Lothian from Ayrshire, where I was living.

25. Being a Governor is quite a frustrating role because you can only act on the information you're given. You are aware that maybe there are other things going on that you're not told about. The more distant I became, chronologically, from having internal ways of finding out what was going on, the less effective one could become. I'm not saying there was a conspiracy to keep the Governors out of things, that's just the way of an institution. There was never any hesitation in providing information if you asked for more. I felt it was useful to have another viewpoint from where you heard what was going on.
26. I was comfortable that the staff were moving in a direction that was appropriate, as times changed. I felt that the attempt was being made to continue the fundamental commitments that the school had always stood for. Those virtues were to care for others, unselfishness and the charitable aspect.

Policy

27. The general policy of the school was to provide a safe and happy environment where children could develop. How this was delivered continued to evolve through time. I recall no information about specific training or recruiting. Issues of discipline were dealt with by the Headmaster, who updated the Board on contentious matters. I do not recall having concerns over how such matters were handled.

Strategic Planning

28. The Board as a whole bore responsibility for strategic planning. The potential for abuse was a reality the majority of the Board were well aware of. The Governors were all sensible, intelligent people. You would have to go around with your eyes tight shut if you didn't realise that sexual abuse was prevalent in our society. One thing I would

have emphasised at Board meetings was just how prevalent child sex abuse was in all strata of society. In any situation where you have got groups of children and groups of adults in contact with each other, there is the possibility of abuse. If you get a rotten apple in a situation where children are resident, particularly away from home, then they are at risk.

29. The main thing I remember about the school's strategic approach is that considerable consideration was given to the reorganisation of the House system. I don't remember anything else particularly. There were two parts as to why the reorganisation was done. Financially, it made more sense in terms of having year groups in houses rather than a wide range of ages. There are two schools of thought in boarding schools as to whether it's a good idea to have a house system with youngsters and older children mixed up together or whether it's better to have year groups. The traditional approach was to have young and old going through the school mixed together. As time wore on, it became more popular to do it in year group.

30. For example, Merchiston had always had year groups. Loretto made the decision to change. That was around the latter time when I was a Governor. All changes were also affected by the financial position of the school. In retrospect, I don't know if the possibility of abuse of older and younger children was considered. Clearly, in the old house system, there was the possibility of bullying of younger children by older children. That would have been a factor in moving for the change. I wasn't aware of any actual benefits resulting from the change.

Recruitment / training / supervision / appraisal / evaluation of staff

31. The only time I was involved in staff appointments was when I was involved in the selection and appointment of a new Headmaster, Mr Michael Mavor. Lord Johnston asked me to be on the interviewing committee. That was the only occasion I was on an interviewing committee at the school.

32. The post was advertised in educational journals. At the first round of interviews we interviewed three or four candidates. There was no clear agreement and a bit of indecision about which of those initial candidates should be approached for the post. A new candidate suddenly appeared in the form of Michael Mavor. It was an odd process. Michael Mavor had been the headmaster of both Gordonstoun and Rugby, was an Old Lorettonian and a contemporary of some of the Board members. He was wanting to come back to Scotland. Michael Mavor was interviewed and appointed.
33. I saw references for all the unsuccessful candidates. I'm not saying Michael Mavor didn't produce references, however I don't recall seeing them. I do not know if registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland was a requisite for the post. The Clerk to the Board of Governors would have made sure every "i" was dotted and "t" crossed in terms of suitability. If disclosure checks had to be done, they would have been done.
34. I was not involved training, supervision, appraisal or evaluation of staff. I did not train staff in arrangements to ensure children were heard nor in child protection matters. I may have known about staff training at the time but I don't recall now.

Culture within Loretto School

35. The Loretto culture stressed care and concern for others, tolerance and courtesy and the opportunity for self-fulfilment. The practice of fagging did not exist, not that I was aware of.

Discipline and punishment

36. Children were disciplined by members of staff or, exceptionally, by the Headmaster. There was no corporal punishment. There may have been a formal policy in relation to discipline and punishment. I know nothing further about that. Senior pupils had some limited responsibility for management of younger pupils.

Day to day running of Loretto School

37. I was not involved with the day to day running of the school. I would never say abuse could not occur or go undetected. However many policies of protection may be in place, it is impossible to monitor what goes on between two people in privacy in a school or anywhere else. If two people can be in a room together, whether one is old and one is young or whatever they are, there is no way of knowing what's been going on, unless they tell you. We want to make all situations, not just schools, as safe as we possibly can for children. The bottom line is that we don't live in a perfect world and you can't legislate for every possible contingency.

Concerns about Loretto School

38. I was not aware of the school ever being the subject of concern as an ongoing problem, in school or to any external body or agency, or any other person, because of the way in which children and young people in the school were treated. All the time I was a Governor and a parent, I never heard any whispers of concern about sexual abuse. I had very long ears because it was part and parcel of my working life to pick up minor indications that perhaps something untoward was going on.
39. I was not aware of children protection issues for the children, at the time I was a Governor. One parent phoned me because he was concerned that his son was being bullied. I spoke to the appropriate people, either the headmaster or housemaster. I would have gone through the headmaster first because I thought that was the most appropriate way of dealing with it. It was a major issue for the boy but it wasn't horrendous bullying, like sadism or torture. The bullying was the sort of thing that goes on in any school and has to be taken control of.
40. While I was a Governor, evidence of abuse some decades earlier emerged. There was an article in one of the papers about a film producer's time at school and how he

had been abused by a master. The school was open about this and all potential victims were contacted by the school immediately, by writing to all of the producer's contemporaries. I saw the letter at the time but I can't remember the content. The school asked people to come forward and tell them. It was very important to know what had happened and, God forbid, was there any possibility that a parallel situation could be on-going? There was another victim who said what had happened to him but he did not want to be named.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

41. Anyone could make a complaint. I'm not sure through which process. All complaints were taken very seriously. I was approached by a handful of parents over the time I was on the Board with things that worried them. I followed through on that and had a talk to a couple of children whose parents were worried about things going on at school. I was there if that sort of situation arose.
42. I'm sure, as a Governor, I had knowledge of the complaints' procedure at the time but I haven't now. The parent of the child who was being bullied contacted me because he knew me, knew I was a Governor and thought I could be helpful in trying to get it sorted. I can't recall whether the school gave every parent the opportunity to approach me. I would think probably not.
43. I don't remember having knowledge of the complaints' procedure as a parent. Like myself, most of the Lorettonian parents would be on the phone to the housemaster or Headmaster if they had a concern, straight away. When my children started school I would have been sent a whole package of information. Whether there was something in it about a complaints' procedure, I have no idea.

Trusted adult

44. There was a system for each pupil to have a nominated member of staff to help them. I'm not sure how effective this was, as those adults offering guidance varied in how good they were or could be at this and whether they could make a decent relationship with the child.
45. The staff members who were nominated persons, were nominated by the management team at the school or the Headmaster. I didn't have any information about whether the staff were trained to talk to children. I don't know whether the nominated person scheme went on or whether the counsellors replaced that.

Abuse

46. During my time as a Governor, the school had a definition of abuse that it applied in relation to the treatment of children at the school. I do not recall the detail of this or how it was communicated.

Child protection arrangements

47. I have no information in relation to the way staff were given guidance and instruction on how children in their care at the school should be treated, cared for and protected against abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour towards them.
48. I have no information in relation to what guidance and instruction was given to staff on how to handle, and respond to, reports of abuse or ill-treatment of children by staff, other adults, or fellow pupils. Nor do I have information about how much autonomy or discretion was given to staff, including managerial staff, in relation to these matters.
49. I have no information in relation to what child protection arrangements were in place to reduce the likelihood of abuse, ill-treatment, or inappropriate conduct by staff, or

other adults, towards children at the school nor whether I thought the arrangements worked.

50. Those matters fell within my remit as Care and Welfare Governor although I do not recall being given a remit as to what the role concerned. A lot of information was given to me about all of these areas but, at this distance, what specifically was in what document and what was said and not said, I really don't have any formal recollection of. At the time, if I had been concerned about inadequacies in definitions or whatever, I would have had no hesitation in raising concerns.
51. In my professional situation, child protection was integral to my role. I took the view with my staff that all of my staff had to understand the reality of child abuse, the prevalence of child abuse and the implications of child abuse. I couldn't possibly have been as involved as Governor, as I was with members of my department who I saw on a daily basis and for whom I was responsible. The running of the school is primarily the business of the headmaster, in my view. I didn't have knowledge of child protection arrangements from being a parent. I had knowledge of these matters from my professional situation.

External monitoring

52. I have no information concerning visits to the school by inspectors or other officials.

Record-keeping

53. While I was a Governor, I received copious written information relating to every aspect of the school's operation. The record-keeping seemed to be extensive. I have not kept copies of documents I received and, with the passage of time, I have no recollection of much of the detail.

Personal involvement in investigations into abuse at Loretto School

54. I was never involved in any investigation on behalf of the school into allegations of abuse or ill-treatment of children at the school or into inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards children. I did not hear any whispers about abuse during my time as Governor, apart from the historic situation involving the film producer. I was never aware of a suggestion that children were sexually abused. I was aware that there were issues from time to time relating to bullying or children being unhappy. There was nothing that raised huge alarm for me.
55. I was not aware of concerns about staff members **CRL** and **BND** **BND** between 1999 and 2009. I do not recall those names.

Reports of abuse and civil claims at Loretto School

56. I became aware of one historical abuse case involving the school. That was the case involving the film director. I was aware of some of what that the other victim had said. The school co-operated to the full with all involved and steps towards prosecution occurred. I thought there was little doubt abuse had occurred because the accounts were very clear and consistent. I'm not saying there are never false claims but it is much more likely than not, that someone claiming abuse has been victimised or abused.
57. That historic event had happened thirty years earlier. The present day school is a completely different place to the school when that abuse had happened. A number of the Board members were contemporaries of the film director and knew the abuser. It was interesting that so many of them came back to be members of the Board because there had been some very unhappy, miserable times at Loretto thirty or forty years earlier.
58. When my eldest child went to Loretto the children came home two or three times a term but certainly not every weekend. By the time I became a Governor, children could

go home at the weekend, anytime they wanted and their parents could visit them at school, any time they wanted. The children were much less vulnerable in the 1980's than they had been in the 1960's and 1970's. They were far less prisoners in the boarding school system.

Police investigations / criminal proceedings

59. I was never aware of ongoing police investigations into alleged abuse at the school, either as a parent or a Governor.

Convicted abusers


60. I do not know if any person who worked at the school was convicted of the abuse of a child or children at the school, during my time as a parent and as a Governor. I think in the historical abuse case, the alleged abuser died.

Helping the Inquiry

61. Children are only safe anywhere where there is a culture of openness and where they can trust that they are heard. I would very much hope children at Loretto trusted they were heard and I didn't think that was not the case. As an adult or as a professional person, you can try and set up a situation where you feel you have given children opportunities to be listened to and heard. What is so difficult, is to know when the children themselves fully understand what is on offer.
62. What goes on in people's heads is very complicated and very private. Sometimes, with the best will in the world, children will still feel they won't be believed or be frightened that they'll be drawing attention to themselves. There is no guarantee that the children,

for whom the services on offer are designed, will totally understand that and feel confident enough to approach it.

- 63. Of course all adults working with children, particularly in a residential setting, need to be screened but this will never provide a guarantee of their safety.
- 64. 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..... 19 November 2020