

STATEMENT OF REDACTED

Address: REDACTED
Occupation: School Support Officer
Taken: 5 September 2002

I am employed as a part time casual School Support Officer, and have been employed for 15 years by St Ann's.

I started at St Ann's 16 years ago as a volunteer working as an aid support officer before gaining a permanent casual position.

I commenced working 2 days a week before increasing my hours to 2½ days.

I am responsible for assisting the children at St Ann's in their extra curricular activities.

My days fall into a regular pattern.

On Tuesday, I take the children to the pool and assist them with changing, and any other needs.

I undertake yard duties on Wednesdays.

I assist REDACTED with cooking activities on Wednesday afternoons.

I also undertake the administrative work for these activities, such as preparation for the home economic class.

I hold a small bus license and sometimes drive the children to the bank and the library at Marion.

I assist REDACTED with teaching signing to the non-verbal children.

I also help with relaxation time.

I also go on walks with the children.

I cannot remember whether Perkins was already employed at St Ann's when I started working at St Ann's or whether he arrived after I started.

I did not have much to do with Perkins.

I saw Perkins in the yard at recess time, or when he was having a coffee in the staff room with other staff.

I understood that Perkins drove the bus for the school, although I did see him around the school on occasions.

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I recall that Perkins invited me around to his daughter's house for a cup of coffee the day before the Milk Carton Regatta.

He had helped the students build the milk carton regatta vessel.

This was early on in my time at St Ann's and the only time I had contact with Perkins outside of school hours.

I did not notice anything strange about Perkins.

He struck me as a "rough diamond".

He seemed to me to be like a "railway fetter you might find up at Peterborough".

I did not notice that he took any particular interest in the children.

I never saw Hawkes at the school.

I did see him at the pool once or twice helping the children.

I assumed Hawkes had been cleared by the school to work with the children.

Hawkes looked quite strange.

He was unkempt with long hair.

There was also something about him that was a bit strange but cannot say exactly what it was.

I assumed Hawkes was a friend of Perkins'.

I do not recollect that Hawkes came on the bus with Perkins, but think that he met us at the pool.

I remember that Perkins said something to me like, "this is a mate of mine", I presume to explain why he was there.

Hawkes worked with MK, a boy of 10 – 11, on this particular day.

I normally swam with MK, as he had been assigned to me to assist at the swimming pool.

MK had autism and needed changing, and help and support in the water.

I normally changed MK before swimming class, and then swam with him.

Hawkes on this occasion changed MK before class.

I still swam with MK.

Hawkes may have changed him after the class, I can't remember.

I don't know why Hawkes helped with MK.

Swimming classes were supervised by the class teacher responsible and sometimes the sports teacher.

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The sports teacher would stay at the pool if there were a number of classes coming to the pool that day.

I don't recall that Perkins' behaviour was unusual on the bus.

I heard he took some children away for respite care at the weekend, but because I was not there at the weekend, only on Wednesdays and Thursdays, I never heard or saw anything about those occasions.

We had a meeting after school one day when Claude Haman ("**Haman**"), the Principal, told us about the allegations of sexual abuse.

This was a de-brief on what had happened.

Someone had told me a couple of days before that something awful had happened.

Perkins had left the school by the time Haman spoke to us.

I recall the kids were asking where Perkins was.

Someone said he had taken early retirement or was sick.

I still don't know exactly what happened between Perkins and the children and don't want to know.

The matter was not well handled from the staff's point of view as we were advised of the problems but then there was no further discussion or support for the staff members from that time on.

I think Claude Haman may have told us to keep it confidential.

I never saw a police officer at school.

There was some discussion amongst the staff afterwards.

We were all shocked and horrified.

Someone said that 1 of the students, MR [REDACTED], wouldn't sit in the front seat of the bus with Perkins when we were having discussions afterwards.

That would not have put us on alert, as MR [REDACTED] was a troublesome student, and often wouldn't do what he was asked.