

WITNESS STATEMENT

(CJ Act 1967, s.9 MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981, r.70)

Statement of RC-A626

Age if under 18 Over 18..... (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: DPA

This statement (consisting of ... **3**... pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything in it which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signature: DPA Date: 22/7/03

I wish to make a statement regarding a former teacher of mine by the name of John Maestri.

I was born in 1972 and lived with my parents and three sisters at an address in DPA London. When I was five years old I began attending St Benedict's Roman Catholic Boys' School in Ealing. At the time the school was split into three; the junior school for boys aged 5-9, the middle school for boys aged 10-12 and the upper school for boys aged 13-18.

I became aware of John Maestri when I began attending the middle school at St Benedict's when I was aged about 10. From what I can recall Mr Maestri was a teacher in the middle school and taught maths and other subjects. I recall him giving assemblies in the middle school which suggests that, at some stage, he became head of the middle school but I can't be sure of this.

Mr Maestri taught maths to my class for a couple of years. He was in charge of the school table tennis team and he made me the team captain. As a member of the team I suppose I got to know Mr Maestri more than my classmates. I would describe Mr Maestri as a friendly teacher but there would be a distance between him and the pupils because of the position he held.

When I was about 12 years old I was struggling with maths and Mr Maestri offered to give me further tuition to bring me up to speed. He offered his services to a number of other pupils in the middle school. I decided to accept the offer of extra tuition and my parents paid Mr Maestri for this service. For the nine or ten months prior to Mr Maestri leaving St Benedict's I received the tuition.

To receive the tuition I would go to Mr Maestri's flat in DPA Ealing. The school owned the flat as far as I'm aware. I can't remember the number of the house but Mr Maestri lived in the top flat and another teacher, Mr Anwyl, lived in the ground floor flat. I would visit Mr Maestri on a weekly basis for one or two hours. My parents would drop me off at the flat during the evening in the school week and would collect me after my tuition.

For the first two or three occasions everything seemed fine. We would sit at a desk and he would help me with my maths

Signature: DPA Signature witnessed by: DS Gareth Morgan.....

Continuation of Statement of

RC-A626

studies. However, after this, Mr Maestri started doing things that made me feel uncomfortable. It started with him putting his arm around my shoulder as we were sitting next to each other at the desk. This behaviour continued and gradually became worse. Whilst we were sitting at the desk he would ask me to sit on his lap whilst he was teaching me. I would do this but it made me feel very uncomfortable. I felt that this was strange but I was too young to question it, as he was my teacher. I was behind in my maths and was getting hassle to improve and didn't want to upset the process by refusing to sit on his lap.

Over the months his behaviour gradually got worse and he would kiss me on the cheek and hug me tightly whilst I was sitting on his lap. It got to the stage where I dreaded going to his flat for this tuition but I felt as if I had no choice if I was to improve my grades. I recall one visit after a holiday period, it may have been the Christmas period, when he told me he had missed me and I thought 'This is not right.'

On my final visit to his flat we were sitting at the desk doing studies when he told me to sit on his lap and proceeded to hug me and kiss me on the cheeks and on the mouth. Mr Maestri put his tongue in my mouth and kissed me for what seemed like ten minutes. I didn't do anything to stop him because I was afraid of what would happen to me. I was worried that I would be expelled or asked to leave the school if I stopped him or made an accusation. Mr Maestri held my hand and took me into his bedroom where he took off my clothes. I can't remember exactly what I was wearing but it would have been a shirt and trousers/jeans. He stripped me down to my underpants and told me to lie on the bed. He lay on the bed so that we were side by side facing each other. I'm pretty sure he was fully clothed. He was kissing me on the lips, putting his tongue in my mouth, whilst we lay on the bed and was touching my body. I can't remember what parts of my body he touched. This continued for a few minutes until I began to cry. I was crying because I wanted him to stop but I didn't know what to do. When I began crying Mr Maestri stopped what he was doing and was apologising to me. I got dressed and we went back into the living room and continued the tuition at the desk. Nothing more was said about what had just occurred.

I was collected by one of my parents after the lesson, probably my dad, and was driven home. When I arrived home I broke down in tears and told my parents everything that had happened with Mr Maestri. They told me not to worry and that I hadn't done anything wrong. I was aware that my mother contacted the school about Mr Maestri and after this the Abbott, Father Francis, came to our house. I was asked to go into the lounge where my parents and the Abbott were waiting. The Abbott asked me to explain everything that had happened with Mr Maestri in complete detail which I did. He asked me loads of questions and I remember that I had to tell him absolutely everything.

I continued to attend school but Mr Maestri never taught me again. Within a matter of days Mr Maestri had left the school.

DPA

Signature:

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DS Gareth Morgan

Continuation of Statement of

RC-A626

Although it was stated that he had left for health reasons, I was sure that he had left because of what he had done to me. I didn't tell anyone else at the time about this, including my school friends, because I was too embarrassed about the whole thing. Since then, and prior to being contacted by DS Morgan, I did tell my wife what had happened. I have never seen or spoken to Mr Maestri since this incident. I would be willing to attend court if necessary.

DPA

Signature:

Signature witnessed by:

DS Gareth Morgan

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