

ORAL HISTORY RECORDING TRANSCRIPT

'Fighting for our Rights' project

Surname	Shaw
Given names	Robert Thomas
Date of birth	1954
Place of birth	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire
Date of interview	15 May 2017
Length of interview	01:17:45
Number of tracks	1
Name of interviewers	Ijeoma Aniyeloye, Rhian Betty, Jen Kavanagh
Copyright	© Kingston Museum and Heritage Service, courtesy of Bob Shaw

IA: This is an oral history interview with Robert Shaw by Ijeoma Aniyeloye, on Monday the 15th of May 2017, also present are.

RB: Rhian Betty.

JK: And Jen Kavanagh.

IA: The interview is taking place at Robert's home in Tolworth as part of Kingston Centre for Independent Livings, Fighting for Our Rights project. Good morning Bob.

RS: Morning [laughs].

IA: Could you please state your full name?

RS: My full name's Robert Thomas Shaw.

IA: What is your date of birth?

RS: Oh, right now [laughs], okay, it's [REMOVED] 1954.

IA: Okay, where were you born?

RS: I was born in Peterborough in Cambridgeshire.

IA: And did you grow up there?

RS: Yeah.

IA: If you don't mind, what were your parents' names?

RS: My father was Thomas Arthur Shaw, and my mother was Audrey Patricia Shaw, nee Crowson.

IA: What were their professions?

RS: My mother was a housewife, although she did a bit of part time working during my childhood, I mean bits and pieces. My father was an insurance broker, he had his own company which his father had set up before that, so it was known as Shaw and Sons, doesn't exist anymore, in Peterborough.

IA: Where did you go to school, primary, secondary?

RS: My--, initially I went to an all girls' school that had an infant's junior department which was mixed, and then I passed an entrance exam to Stamford Grammar School so I attended that until I was 16, and then I quickly left there as soon as I could because I didn't really find that--, it was an all boy's school, I wasn't very happy, it was not in the same town that I lived in so it was not easy to build social relationships and extend those into the evenings, so I went to the technical college as it was then, it's now part of Peterborough University. That was in Peterborough, to do my A levels, and that was up to 16.

IA: And how old were you when you finished school?

RS: Well finished school, I mean my O levels as it was then was 16, then I did A levels at 18, and then I transferred from there to--, this was in the day before you had to go to university to become a teacher, went to a teachers training college in Reading, for three years.

IA: Okay. When you finished your teacher training college, what was your first job?

RS: My first job in the 1970s, so we're talking mid '70s now, now at that time there were a lot of teachers around, lots and lots, so local authorities were basically creating a pool, a pool of teachers and they would allocate you a job, so opposed to applying specifically for a particular job in a particular school you applied to a pool and the pool basically gave you a job, they referred you to a school. And although I would have liked to have stayed in Berkshire, the local authority to which you were born was the one which was considered to be the one that should provide you with a job [laughs]. So I went to Cambridgeshire, and Cambridgeshire, Peterborough authority provided me with a job in a school called Lincoln Road Boys' School. Now that was at the time there were education action zones, which were schools in areas, or in communities where a large number of the students did not have English as a first language, and Lincoln Road Boys' was in one of these schools, it was also what used to be called a secondary modern, or a technical school. It was in an old building, an old Victorian style building, it was all boys, it was not what I was expecting [laughs], and I was there for a year, not a very happy year I have to admit. And so that was my first job so I did that for a year.

IA: So what's it though--, because it's not what you expected or the situation and the school that made it not, you know, a very good year for you?

RS: It was not what I was--, expected. Partly because I'd sort of drifted into teaching because I hadn't really, when I left--, when I finished my A levels I wasn't really quite sure what I wanted to do, and I knew because I'd enjoyed my sixth form years very much I found social life, social life that hadn't existing prior to that, and young ladies as well I was discovering. So at that time, for two years I basically, my studies are were sort of, you know, secondary to enjoying myself, and as a result I didn't achieve quite the levels that I might have wanted if I'd wanted to go to university, though I wasn't ambitious to do that to be honest. So I ended up going, drifting into teacher's training college, hoping that I might somehow find a path through there or discover something else that I might want to do while I was there, but I ended up going doing my teaching year, doing my first year, initial year, and then because it wasn't fantastically wonderful, I decided to give up teaching, and I stopped teaching, but I didn't know what to do. So again, a friend who I'd met at college said, "Well why don't you come down to the coast where we've got a summer season at a small holiday camp," that again doesn't exist anymore, it wasn't a big one, not a Butlin's or a Pontin's, it was

Madison's on the Kent coast, and at Romney, Romney Marshes, so a tiny little place, very old fashioned, very Hi-De-Hi and all of that. And so I went down there and did night security for a while and then they said, "Oh our manager of the cafeteria has just walked out, would you be interested in doing that because we're desperate?" and I said, "Okay, fine, so I'll manage that," so I did that for a bit. And then when the season ended I was at a loose end, this was in October, well end of September, I was at a loose end so I bummed around for a year basically doing a variety of different jobs wherever I could get them, moving around the south of England, I went Southampton, Cheltenham and Brighton, wherever there was a possibility of something different, there might be a bit of work. So I did a variety of different things and then ended up coming up to London where I joined the civil service for six months, and discovered that one thing I learnt from that was I didn't want to be part of the civil service so that was fine, and then just by chance I was staying at the Fulham YMCA, I met-- sorry if this is too much information, you probably won't-- this is-- you don't need this. I met the headteacher of-- it's a long story so I won't go into that, I met the headteacher of Southborough Boys' which is Southborough High School down at the ACE, and we just met by chance, and we got chatting, and very brief conversation, but a few weeks after our meeting he contacted the place I was staying, Fulham YMCA, and he said, "Look, we are desperate for a teacher in September, are you interested?" And I'd sort of not really wanted to go back into teaching, but I was conscious that I wasn't going anywhere in the civil service and I didn't know what else to do so I thought, right, okay, I'll come into teaching, I'll go back to teaching, give it another shot, my parents were very keen because they could see me being a layabout for the rest of my life so they were quite keen that I should do that. So I ended up coming down into Surbiton, that's when I started here, so this is '77, and '77... '76, and no, '77, sorry. And that's how I got into that, not what they needed at Southborough was a teacher to work with not your high flyers, but the low level students, the slow learners, ones with special needs, though they didn't necessarily call them groups with special needs, they were their sort of lower level groups and that's what they wanted me to do really, work on basic literacy and numeracy, English and maths with those groups, but the head felt that you know, that that wasn't considered at that stage to be a very fun thing to do so he said, "Well we'll make sure we give you some other classes that you've got a chance to, you know, fly with, you know, so you're not stuck with the divvies," that was basically the idea. Now I'm sorry if I'm saying that on the tape, but that's-- that was the-- you know what I'm saying, that was the attitude.

IA: Hmmm hmm.

RS: But I met a lady called Val Carter who was the head of the department that looked after this particular group, the slow learning group, and she said to me, I remember her saying, first time I met her, she said, "When you start working and getting to know these young people," and they're all boys at Southborough, "you won't want to do anything else," and that I wouldn't say that became particularly true at Southborough Boys', but because of my involvement with slow learning groups at Southborough I met the deputy head as she was then at St Philip's special school. Had no idea, because when you were training in the '70s nobody really thought about special needs, there was no modules or courses that talked about children with special educational needs, because this is pre Warnock, so are you aware of what Warnock is? The Warnock report in 1981, Mary Warnock, she produced a document basically addressing the issue of young people, children with special needs, and many of whom were in residential homes, well mad houses, what used to be the mad houses, we had several up here, just on Epson, The Manor and various others, and these children were considered ineducable, so the kids with Down's, the kids with, you know, neurological problems, etc, etc, and they were not being given any education, there were many that weren't. If you were a slow learner then, you know, you had a chance, but kids who looked different or had, you know, particular, you know, advanced developmental needs, they were not schooled effectively, they were just looked after and that was the way, this is right up to the '60s. And Warnock wrote this report and it came out in '81 that basically said children are-- no child should be considered to be ineducable and we should be providing schooling for all children. Now Kingston to be fair already had its three special schools, Dysart, Bedelsford and St Philip's which was addressing some of those issues, but it changed the whole atmosphere because it meant that universities and colleges, those that were still around, the teachers training colleges needed to address the fact that there were children with special needs in-- that needed to be educated in schools, and of course there were special schools, special schools

did exist, it wasn't that they didn't exist, it's just that there were lots of children who weren't being educated in those schools.

IA: So...

RS: Sorry, I'm not sure where [laughs]...

IA: It's alright, very relevant, so going back to Southborough Boys' School, what was your experience there like, you know, did you enjoy teaching there?

RS: [Laughs]. It was certainly a step up from the very first school that I taught in, because by then I had become aware, I mean I came out of college quite--, I mean having gone in wondering whether I wanted to be a teacher or not, by the time I came out of college I thought, yes, I think I know I can, you know, do something with a group of students and I get them interested in learning. My first year at Lincoln Road Boys' in Peterborough had certainly knocked that out of me [laughs], I remember my very first lesson thinking, I'll dramatize a piece of Shakespeare, we did the witches scene, I had the kid standing on the teacher's desk and they thought, oh, this is an absolute lunatic, complete lunatic, and some of these lads were taller than I was, you know, these 14, 15 year olds, these were big fellas and they thought--, and what didn't help was we were doing this Shakespeare which the head of the department had basically said, "This is what you should be doing," he basically threw the books at me and said, "Get on with that, that's what you should be doing, that's what they should be learning Shakespeare," these kids could hardly read, let alone do Shakespeare, and of course I didn't know that, I had no background knowledge or anything. So it wasn't a very pleasant experience. When I got to Southborough Boys' it was different, partly because I was expecting, you know, the similar sort of thing, but the groups were smaller, what Southborough had done had said, right, children with--, who are slower learners, less developed, who are not likely to get O levels of GCSE or CSE or whatever it was at the time, examination students, they should still be doing something of value. So we still expect you to be, you know, teaching them basic English so they can write letters, write lists, you know, read a newspaper and, you know, do basic maths, so they can, you know, tell the time, all of that sort of stuff so I was doing that. And some of the groups I was working with I was enjoying, it was quite nice because they were small-ish groups and that was great, there was no teaching assistants or anything like that but I was working with them and of course I got other groups as well that I was working with, I was also doing--, at that stage I was doing a bit of PE, so my curriculum was a bit more varied than it had been at the previous school. And I found some colleagues who I mean I mentioned Val Carter earlier on, and she was great support and great help, although she wasn't there that much longer, and then I met various other colleagues who I was getting on well with. Yeah, so that the experience was pleasant enough, however, having said that, I was still not sure whether teaching was for me, and had been there three years and I was beginning to think, okay, now is do I really want to continue in the profession, I'm not particularly ambitious, what do I want to do if I'm not doing this, and so I was beginning to have thoughts about where am I going? When, the opportunity to join St Philip's turned up.

IA: So what year exactly did you join St Philip's?

RS: '81, 1981, it was April, the deputy head turned up at--, well she just walked in, I'd visited St Philip's and like many teachers, you know, we had no idea, many teachers in the mainstream no idea what a special school was like so I was going up the drive I remember thinking, what on earth am I going to see, imagining that I might see, you know, kids hanging from the chandeliers and all that sort of thing. And chandeliers, wow, that's assuming they'd got them, but yeah, I mean thought it'd be a sort of crazy sort of place to be, you know, with kids screaming and yelling and shouting. It was totally different, and I was so impressed when I went up to see the school in '80--, it must have been--, actually, no, it was 1980 or '79 even when I first went. That I said to Brenda who was the deputy who I'd met through working on a project together to do with maths for special needs students, I said to her, "Ooh, if there's a job going here I might be interested," and she remembered that and she just turned up in the staff room at Southborough Boys', I hadn't seen her for over a year, and she just turned up and she said, "Do you remember you said to me once that if there was a job going at St Philip's you'd be interested. Well there is a job going, if you're--,"

if you come up, if you come up after school and talk to the head I'm sure it'll be yours," and I had no idea, didn't even know there was a job going, etc, anyway I cycled up, I was on the bike. I cycled up to the school, put-- , was pushing the bike up the drive and thinking, what on earth, well no, I'd already had that sort of, I thought it was really lovely, but I didn't think for a second because I didn't have any experience of special needs, that I would get the job. But basically I was given the job before I was even interviewed, it was in those days things were very very different, he basically said, "Right, the job you'll be doing is this but we need you to say this basically now." So fortunately he did give me a couple of days, I ummed and ahed over it for two days thinking, do I really want to go down this route, and then thought, well I've been sitting around saying I don't know where I'm going at Southborough, I might as well. And it changed my life, because I don't think I'd have stayed in teaching had I not started at St Philip's because it was a very different school, it was caring, it had a very pastoral heart, you could feel the heart of the school. It-- , you know, I'm not saying the kids weren't tricky at times, because they were children with special needs, but there was a real sense in which you were looking after the whole kids, and sometimes their families as well, you know, you were really-- , there was a sense of care that I wasn't seeing and hadn't experienced in my secondary experience at Lincoln Road Boys' or Southborough Boys' and I thought, this is it for me. And it didn't take long before I had reached, you know, a place where I thought, this is, you know, I'm very happy in the profession in this particular school.

IA: Can you tell us a bit more about the aims of St Philip's, you know, what provisions did they offer, what was the whole school system like?

RS: Right, well I mean it's changed, St Philip's has changed as the government has, well all special education has changed, as the government have recognised that it exists, following Warnock and following all the supplementary white papers and green papers that followed. When I got there, when I first walked in I mean it was a school that as I said, I mean it had a real pastoral role, and I'm glad to say it can-- , still continues to this day to have a real heart and a care for the kids, so I think the relationships between the staff and students is, it's different from what you'd expect in a mainstream secondary, and a mainstream primary. There are lots more staff, so you're well supported, although that wasn't necessarily true-- , well it was true when I got there, because the class sizes were smaller, I mean class sizes were then about 14, it's now down to about ten, and with an LSA, every class has got a teacher and a teaching assistant. That wasn't true back then, every class had a teacher, but not necessarily a teaching assistant, but the class sizes were much smaller, but you could get to know students quite well. At the time there were 100 students in the school, or just over I think it was, though it's a popular school, I mean St Philip's, I suspect Bedelsford and Dysart are the same, been well supported by the local authority, albeit there's been shifts in their thinking over the years. But yes, it's been popular, and been well funded and local authorities, Richmond, Sutton, Surrey, Merton, though have wanted to send students to us and parents have-- , who've come into the school have looked, don't know if any of you have actually been up there and seen it, but those who've come into the school have felt, parents, that they wanted their young people to come to St Philip's and that's always been true. So that the term flagship school, I've heard that mentioned by a director of local education here, Patrick Leeson when he was here, he used the term flagship to describe St Philip's, or if it was St Philip's or all the special education in Kingston. But yeah, I mean Kingston's-- , it's been generally been a good authority. The provision there was, at the time there was no national curriculum, so basically you could do what you wanted [laughs], but the school did recognise that what we want from our students is to give them the skills that are going to enable them to live as independent a life as they possibly can, once they leave. In those days, or just before I arrived, work was a little bit easier to get, we had several industries around here including some that had basically, you know, that factory labour, you know, where you'd have a conveyer belt system, you know, where students could go and they could be doing repetitive jobs or whatever it is, or you could do, I mean that sounds boring, the shops, there was work was around. And many of the students would go out and get work in low level jobs, as we would call them today. But nevertheless that would be work. It's not so true now, not so true now. So that was the goal was to support the students, to give them as much of an education as we could, there were no-- , apart from art, don't think there was anything else, don't think we offered any examinations then at the time, it was really, you know, you go to-- , come to St Philip's and you get basic skills, but there was no certification, we didn't even provide a certificate, at St Philip's certificate, although students would leave with a folder of the work

they could do and with a resume that they could give to an employer which would basically say how they did. We also, well as time went on work experience became something that the students all did, as is common of course in secondary schools now. So yes, so it was a school that had a lot of heart, it had an orchard, it had huge amount of ground which of course was sold off over a time, it had animals, we had geese, there was a goat there at one time although that was--, preceded me, it had the most lovely grounds. The head at the time who I was with, I mean he was very creative, he was a musician, he was an artist, I mean a well known local artist who lived in Leatherhead, he had exhibitions there, and it was a school that really wanted to support these students and give them every opportunity, so drama was very much an important part of the school, and that's where I got involved in that a lot. But yeah, it was a smallish staff, you know, but not many students, good ratio, small classrooms, but reasonably well funded, the focus being to give the students as much as they possibly could give them and experience, to give them a pleasure in schooling. I mean at the time--, I mean we had our difficult kids, but you know, we wanted the students to really want to come, so there was a practical side, there was a good woodwork shop, there was domestic science, I mean those sort of things were on offer, it wasn't that we were limited, although sometimes that the rooms we'd got weren't ideal, but everybody was expected to chip in. And all the teachers including myself, I mean I'd been trained in secondary, I was an English history teacher really, I didn't know very much maths, I wasn't particularly good at maths, but I wasn't expected to teach at a very high level so that was good. So yeah, so it was, you know, you just chipped in, you did your bit and you taught what you could and if you didn't know something you found out about it and then you went in and you taught it, you know, sort of like that. And at that stage I should say the school was primary and secondary, so we had kids from four years old up to 16, and that changed in the course of time.

IA: Okay, you said something about not having certificates then, but with time did they get qualifications, certificates, you know?

RS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. As time went on, those students that showed prowess, particularly in art because the head at the time was keen on art, he wanted them to go for GCSE or CSE or to get qualifications, and then later on as national curriculum came in, and there was an encouragement, a particular encouragement with special needs, all kids with special needs, whether mainstream or special schools should achieve certain standards, so there's a really big pressure towards the end of the '80s, national curriculum came in and there was a real push on standards. And that changed a lot, that changed the makeup of the school ultimately. And of course there was at the same time there was the philosophical suggestion that special schools shouldn't exist at all and that all children should be integrated into mainstream. Now all except the, perhaps the most severely developed, mentally delayed students, you know, those sort of basically who could do nothing at all, or very little. So Kingston looked at that in the late '80s and the '90s and I remember that one of the last things they--, the head, the head that I knew, John Ainley, did, was to defend the case for special needs within Kingston at that level, at our level which was moderate learning difficulties. So yes, he did, and so St Philip's survived, albeit over time there was a change, the local authority had decided that may--, that primary students should in the main be educated in primary schools mainly and six schools were considered to be schools that would take in a group of special needs students, or those that had got special needs statements, and they would be specialist schools for them, but then at secondary, at the time when the transfer would come from primary to secondary, some of those students might if deemed it was required come to a special school like ours. Dysart and Bedelsford obviously with their more needy students, because all the students at St Philip's with moderate [inaudible 00:27:52] was most of them were ambulant, there were very few that--, very few over the years that needed a wheelchair, or anything like that. Most of them had speech, although not all of them did, some--, I remember a couple of elective mutes we had. Yeah, so over time things changed, and there was a real pressure to ensure that all students, and that's not a bad thing, but all students should be given the best possible education to enable them to achieve qualifications. So as from then, back in the '70s when qualifications weren't considered to be really important, now the students do GCSE at a level, at certain--, for certain subjects, so not all subjects, but certain subjects GCSE, those that can pursue that.

IA: So for now they no longer have the primary sections, just the secondary?

RS: Yeah, but primary--, now where did that go, in the--, about mid 2000s, that that was phased out, and what the local authority said was, and I expect at the end of the day, and no offence to anybody, but at the end of the day it wasn't the philosophical argument that changed things, it really was the financial one, because what was happening as come 16 students were getting to the stage where many of them couldn't go to work anymore, so that--, so the work options, this was end of the '80s, '90s, and the local authority was saying, "Well we've got to--, we have to pay for these students, we're now obliged by law to accommodate students at 16 and beyond into their 19, 20s, we've got to provide for them," and many of them were going to quite pricey residential colleges outside of Kingston. There was no sixth form, Dysart had a sixth form, I suppose Bedelsford had something different, but I don't know. But it was too small, it couldn't accommodate everybody, and there were quite a lot of students who were not able to leave St Philip's and go onto something else, who needed some sort of additional provision, now Kingston didn't have that. So basically they said, "Look, we'll close down the primary department of your school and we will give you a sixth form," so mid 2000s, 2005 onwards, 2007, around about then, we had a new building built, or a half a new building, because that that was built to accommodate our 14 to 19 provision. And now what happens is that the school has grown to about 140 students, about 25 are in the sixth form, as they come to the end of their school years, I mean aged 16, their legal schooling they then have--, many of them go to colleges, local colleges like Nescot and Kingston Richmond, whatever, South Thames. Where they've already got established linked, or where courses are being offered, but there are some who for various reasons they're not ready for college, they don't feel confident or they're all--, there could be all kinds of reasons why they need to stay on, so they stay on then, to St Philip's.

IA: Okay.

RS: I hope this is interesting.

IA: Very, very.

RS: I'm feeling I'm boring you to tears [all laugh].

IA: Very interesting [all laugh], very interesting. And can you please talk us through your progression from being a teacher to the deputy headteacher then?

RS: Oh gosh, yes okay. Right, well part and parcel of that is the changes that were happening, I started as I say, I joined the school in 1981, and I was the teacher of year six which was basically, you know, the end of primary. And I was very happy doing that role, for a period of time, but it was a small department and the ladies, the ladies who were in it, none of them wanted to take the responsibility of heading it up, so eventually, you know, by default I was asked if I would--, head it up, I was the only man at the time in the department, and that had no influence on it at all. But I said, "Okay, well I'll basically head up the department," but I didn't really--, I sort of managed it in a managerial sense, but not--, I didn't really lead the staff 'cause they were all experienced, well most of them were very much more experienced than I was, you know, so it was just sort of a role, but I got paid a little bit extra, but also when national curriculum came in the head like many of us I suppose, we had no idea how it'd impact us. So basically he said, "I don't want to be--," you know, he was beginning to look towards his retirement, he didn't want to really be involved in any of that, so he said, "Go and find out what this is about," so he sent me off on courses doing national curriculum which was at the stage at--, so, "Look at the English and maths," he said, you know, "don't worry about the rest, just look mainly at the English and maths," so I went off to look at these courses and it became apparent very quickly that it was going to make a difference to us because if we were going to have to apply some of it we would have to know what we're doing, so it became a bit bigger than it really was. So eventually my role increases, he gave me, you know, he gave me extra, you know, I was head of the department but I was also heading up national curriculum, then that had to be farmed out as it grew, and then we had, you may know about the numeracy hour and the literacy hour came in in the late '90s. I mean and then level descriptors and all of that, I mean it--, I remember trying to invent criteria based on the national curriculum that would suit our--, breaking it down and looking at what an organisation called B Squared had invented, and had broken down the national curriculum into something

that was suitable for special needs students and I helped to implement that at St Philip's but it was all very a paper based system, now it's all of course very technical and it's all online and all of that. But so I got involved in doing that, and that was the start of where they thought, okay, you know, oh he can do something, you know, he is more than just a class teacher. So gradually as things changed, then as the school changed the head then left, and a new head was appointed from within the school, Helen Goodall and she asked me when it became obvious that our primary department was phased out, she--, because I was head of the department, well, you know, there was nowhere for me to go, it was going to be phased out, was I going to be the last man in. She said, "No, I think the time has come where you need to think about changing, moving, so would you like to move to the other end of the school, key stage three and become head of key stage three as it was then, because all the numbers were changing, all the labels were changing. So I said, "I'd be happy to do that," but I'd still got quite a lot on my plate, because I was still sort of leading on assessment, I was still leading on national curriculum development and things like that, so quite a lot was going on and that became quite a busy period of time for me 'cause I'd got several hats I was wearing. And the school was growing in terms of although the primary department was being phased out, we were gradually getting more and more people wanting to send students in at the secondary level. So gradually we went to parallel classes, in year seven, eight, nine and gradually went through the school, we've now got, I mean I say we, I'm not there anymore, but there are three classes in year seven, three in year eight, three in year nine, so the school's grown. Staffing grew as we were bringing in, I mean for a while--, I haven't even mentioned the therapists, I mean we used to have therapists there for a long period of time, there was a problem with getting speech therapists for a good many years we didn't have anybody regularly. But now we've got a team of our own, we've got therapists that come in that we buy in, because obviously financing is all about local financing and school financing's changed, and so there's more control over that, and the school became an academy last year so that helps with that as well. So the school had changed quite a lot, I mean but the heart of the school, the pastoral side of it has been maintained, you know, the idea that all these students are, you know, we don't just see them as a number, or somebody to get an A star or whatever it is, it's you know the kids, and that's one of the nice things about it, it is really great to have a class that when I arrived there were 12 students in that class, and of course I only knew that first class for a term, because I arrived in April, but it was great to get to know them, you know? I was basically their teacher from the time they walked in in a morning to the time they went, with very few exceptions, I didn't do the music, I didn't do, you know, a couple of the other things, but most of the time I was their teacher. And that was new for me, and it was great, yeah, yeah, it was good.

IA: You've mentioned a few things changing and have you been involved with any campaigns, you know, to improve the services for students?

RS: Campaigns to improve...

IA: Yeah.

RS: Oh gosh! Campaigns as such, not--, you mean outside of school, as such?

IA: Yeah.

RS: No, I'm not--, I haven't, I mean to be absolutely honest, I mean I've found my career and my family have basically, I was talking about this with a friend the other night, has subsumed my life, and that has been all that I have been involved in, so I've thrown all my efforts into work with the school. I mean one of the things that I did do, I was with a couple of very very able parents, and the founder of the parents association, that exists at the school, that still exists there and that happened in the mid '80s, two or three years after we got there and parents came to me and they said, "Wouldn't it be great if we had a parents association?" but the head wasn't very keen, so they never had it. So I got involved in that and I sort of helped to steer that, and still attached to it now, so that was something I did. I was involved a bit with the school being involved in choral competition, the local authority ran a choral competition and St Philip's took part in that musically, and although I'm not particularly musical, I was part of the choir at the school and the choir would go out, so those sort of things, you know, I was involved in. I--, because of my drama

experience or bits, I wrote pantos for the school so I would involve the staff in doing a pantomime for the kids every year and that was something that--, something was going on before I got there, but it changed after I sort of took that on and it--, the style changed, but it still continues.

IA: So looking at the Kingston, you know, area for--, as a whole, what are your thoughts about the overall education provision for special education needs students generally?

RS: I can only speak from my limited experience of--, well my experience of St Philip's and what limited knowledge I have from Bedelsford and Dysart, but I've always thought that it's been well--, Kingston provision has been well respected, I know that there have been parents who have come into St Philip's and have been surprised to find, well like I was, you know, that it's different from what you're expecting. It's quite hard I always think for a parent first of all to be told, you know, "Your child needs specialist provision and we're talking about a special school," so that's quite a heavy blow unless they're already aware of that, and they're desperate for that sort of provision, they know mainstream isn't working for them. So for them to come into a school and find that it is a really nice environment, is great, and one of the great satisfactions that I've had is being able to encourage parents and students as they come new to the school, and enable that transfer from whatever provision they've had beforehand, even though that was a good one, into school like St Philip's and to find that that transfer goes well and that which invariably it does, and that parents are happy and the students are happy and, you know, we've got a really great grounding for education. I have to say, I've used the word happy, and I would say, I mean it--, St Philip's is and has been for me, otherwise I wouldn't have stayed for 35 years, a very happy place to work, you know, I mean obviously, you know, with all the changes it's, you know, there have been tensions all the time, you know, between staff, between management, and I have that position and sometimes between parents and, you know, as you'd expect in any school, you know, there's always going to be tensions, but on the whole it's been a very very happy environment, and the staff--, it's been great to work with colleagues who've really had the interests of the students at heart, you know, as opposed to dare I say, a system which may--, and it may be very different now, a mainstream system that I was familiar within the '70s, where it seemed to be, you know, it was just--, well it wasn't nice. And I have to say, I mean I--, what worries me about the current mainstream system is that it seems to be chasing results all the time, it's all about results, it's not about the individual student, and the good thing about working in a culture where, you know, you've got kids with special needs, is you're focusing not essentially on the need, because the need isn't the essence of the student, but you're aware of that, you're aware of those other factors, you know, and you say, right, okay, we must accommodate this and we must do something about it.

IA: I know you said it's been good overall, you know, the special needs students, the provision for them, but do you think that there are any improvements that could still happen, in the Kingston area for special education needs children?

RS: Well [sighs], improvements? I am... well, I'm concerned at the moment generally about education, in general, I am very concerned from my own personal experience, as well as--, well not so much from St Philip's, but from my own personal experience, on the way that education, or life in general is damaging, you know, our culture maybe is damaging people's mental health, I've had experience of that, I've got family experience of that, and it worries me about that the sort of pressures that we're putting young people under. Somebody said to me once, I mean it was a [laughs]--, years and years ago, it was one of our school improvement partners, an inspector, who worked for the local authority, she--, and she didn't mean it in praise either, she was basically, it was a criticism, she says, you know, "What you've got here at St Philip's is a cotton wool school, it's a school where you're surrounding these kids with cotton wool but life isn't like that, they've got to get out there and it's going to come as a nasty shock," and I didn't think--, I mean although I was offended, by the remark, because you know, yes we wanted to do the best we could for these students, at the same time I accepted the reality that when they leave, you know, life gets hard. And I've been on, I went to the NASEN, the National Association for Special Needs, conferences, and I've heard some statistics about the number of young adults with special needs, the disproportionate number that was in jail or in some sort of psychiatric care or are needing lots and lots of social help, or are mentally ill, or are, you know, are at home playing on their, you know, their games and not getting out, or are out of

work, or are out of education, they've got no support. And it is worrying, you know, when so many of our students with, you know, who don't have those needs, have got issues, and I know there are some, you know, that what are we doing for those kids, you know, with special needs, I mean where are they going to go? And we have--, I mean that's partly why I've got involved, and I mean you were talking about campaigns, I mean for a while--, have you ever heard of the Special Olympics?

IA: Yeah.

RS: Special Olympics, so Special Olympics is--, it's been running now for a few years, they have a local branch, Surrey, Surrey branch and I met Maggie North who's been working with the school for the last four or five years in that--, trying to encourage some of our students to get involved, and when I left St Philip's last year, I thought, right, now I've got a bit of time I will offer my services to Maggie and bless her she took them up and I'm, tonight is one of the sessions that I go along to, so I'm now part and parcel of Special Olympics. And I support some of these students when we go to competitions, and it's great to go, they're not all St Philip's by any means, but kids with special needs, taking part in competitive sport, it's fun, it's--, it gives them an opportunity to get out there, it gives them a sense of achievement, it gives tremendous value, we had one lad at St Philip's who actually took part in the world championships, so basically talking about the Special Olympics, this was in Los Angeles in 2015, that's right, and he did really really well, he won two gold medals. So yeah, yeah, absolutely fantastic. So he was great. But yeah.

IA: Good. So in general, what can we--, children with special needs, what challenges have you encountered?

RS: Challenges in the work?

IA: Yes.

RS: Right, well there's always a challenge in adapting to change, I suppose the first challenge that I mentioned earlier was we--, when I went to St Philip's we had a curriculum but it was almost make it up as you go along sort of thing, yes we knew there were certain subjects you wanted to teach, we knew we wanted to get our students to be able to read and to write and to be able to do basic numeracy, and we knew we wanted to make them able to go out and live independently so we had certain key things. But then of course national curriculum comes in and there's certain levels and there's certain expectations and all of that and so this cotton wool atmosphere had to change, we had to become more academic, and trying to find the balance between the academic and the pastoral. That, you know, that has been--, yeah, I say--, you mentioned challenge, but it's been a challenge but it's been handled well I think over the years, I've known three different heads there and they've all had a different approach, but over the years they've all felt, you know, that the--, we need to move towards the academic, but the same time not lose the heart of the school, and that has been good. It's been a challenge because as I progressed through the school, and I became deputy head because both the head and the deputy they virtually left, this was back in the late 2000s, they both left very very quickly. And at that stage I was sort of heading up key stage three, so I became, I stepped into--, we had a new head come in from outside, and there was nobody else who could step in the position, we had no--, we had a head of post-16 but she really wasn't up for it, and a head of key stage four who wasn't--, who didn't want to be a deputy or assistant, so I became acting deputy and stepped into the role, because partly because I'd been there a long time, you know, longevity has something going for it, you know the school, you know how it works, so I became acting deputy and then when the new head came in and I was acting deputy, she said, "Okay, I'm quite keen that you should have this post full time," so I became deputy. And one of the challenges as deputy was as it always is in a middle management position, is trying to find a middle road between the needs of staff and the interests of staff, and the concerns of staff, and the direction the head wants to take things in. And the last head, Jude, quite rightly wanted to really--, because she was under pressure as well, to improve the academic, you know, this was at a time when from about 1990 onwards, after the introduction of national curriculum, by the year 2000, in that ten years government had suddenly said, "Right, we need to do something about the intellectual capacity of our kids with special needs, particularly those in the moderate learning capacity

because those are the ones who are likely to make the greatest achievement," so they set some ridiculous-- , they started producing all kinds of things, and setting some ridiculous targets that every child should achieve, you know, a levels progress in two terms and a level, you know, if you don't know is a big big step and some of the levels are bigger than others. And it was just undoable for us, but we had to be--, because the local authority was wanting us to make those sort of steps forward, then we had to do the best we could, so one of the challenges was to meet unreasonable expectations, which they presented to us, so that was quite challenging because although we wanted to do the best we could for the kids, and we--, I think we've always done that, we've always done that. But at the same time it required a change of thinking, with the staff, and you know, we tried to bring all kinds of things in, I mean I was involved with the previous deputy in developing Assessment for Learning, AfL, Accelerated Learning, we tried new things that came in we'd sort of pick it up and think, ah, we'll go with this, or that be pivots which we eventually decided we wouldn't go for and there were other things that we brought in, there was CASPA which is the sort of--, 'cause we were being Ofsted as well, that was the other thing of course Ofsted came in and we seemed to have an interesting ride with Ofsted, we had a good one, then a bad one, then a good one, then a bad one and it went up and down and the goalposts continually changed and sometimes we'd have inspectors coming in who had no knowledge of special needs at all but they were there, and that didn't seem right or fair to us. However, be that as it may, we rode the waves as they came, but it created additional pressures, so I suspect one of the things that I had to do was--, in my position was to manage and to be, as much as I possibly could, oil on the waters, to try and find a balance. And to be fair, there have been times when I've had to say to the staff, look, senior management, we cocked it up, we got it wrong, and be open and honest, so I didn't think there was any point in pretending that we hadn't got it wrong when we got it wrong, you know, when we'd made wrong decisions that didn't work and that sometimes was, it generally that was in general policy issues, rather than specific, with specific kids, on the whole working with students we've, you know, we've been very much a team, that's worked well, although there's always the odd one or two, you know, particularly students who've, you know, it hasn't worked, with one or two students. There's been rare times when we've said--, we've had to say goodbye to a student permanently, but on occasion that has happened, sadly.

IA: So...

RS: Yes?

IA: Overall the change in curriculum and, you know, making a bit more academic, how much pressure do you think that puts on the students themselves?

RS: Yes, I mean we were concerned about that, I remember, it must be about six years ago, where we sat down as a staff and we talked as a whole about the issues of the pressure that the students would be under, because at that stage we were--, what we'd been doing, and what the very good head of key stage four had done in the previous ten years, or so, for ten years, that he'd been involved, is he had been looking at ways in which he'd been wanting to give students real experience of work, so he'd developed the work experience programme, he'd developed a career's based programme, we'd got investors in careers as a school, he had developed what was the business venture, oh gosh, I can't remember the name of it, it's on the tip of my tongue but I can't remember the name of it, but a schools business venture where you did--, you'd create a business and you'd go and you'd present it and for years and years we were involved in that. And usually came away [laughs] at some big--, they used to go to Canary Wharf where they'd take part in a competition and the kids would stand up and they'd present the business they'd created and they'd say the money they'd made and they'd show how they'd done it and, you know, advertised it and sold shares and all of that and they present it, and so we got involved in that, and oh, I wish I could remember the name of it.

JK: Is it Young Enterprise?

RS: Enterprise, yeah, thank you, Young Enterprise, yeah, absolutely, you must have been involved [all laugh], that's right, Young Enterprise, that's it, and so it had been--, our focus had been on vocational skills,

obviously as things changed, the head was looking, as the new head came in, she said, "Right, that's all well and good but what about our students who are able to do, you know, to achieve academically?" so quite rightly she was looking at developing that and she brought in new staff who had a different perspective. Now obviously then you have a change of emphasis, now the change of emphasis does create issues, and part of my role as deputy head was to find the balance, find the balance so when we sat down to talk curriculum, you know, we would have to say well you know, what has to go? And eventually more and more of the vocational side, Young Enterprise went and the work experience programme became, you know, it still exists, but it shrank, and more time was given because more time was needed for our students to be given, you know, English and maths so that they could, you know, complete a syllabus, that they could take an exam. And the curriculum began to shrink a little bit, and serious questions, and I mean we had lots of discussions about how that was going to work and what was going to happen, and it's really about--, it was about emphasis and that was, you know, you talked about challenge, that was definitely a challenge, as well as trying--, the academic and the pastoral, because there was a real concern by some of the older members of staff who'd known the school, that we were going to lose the heart. And I have to be honest, I mean I was very concerned about that myself, you know, that it was--, we were going to end up being just basically a secondary school for kids with special educational needs, and what was for me the St Philip's experience would get lost. And others felt that as well. So it was trying to find the balance and it wasn't always easy and there were some tense moments and some difficult conversations, at senior management and middle management level. But you know, the storm was weathered and, yes [laughs], we now have a new head, a new head as of last month, has just started.

IA: So the change, some of the parents, because it has to do with the students, the parents, so how do the parents feel when, you know, it became a bit more academic, and did they find it...

RS: Yeah, I mean it's--, I suspect what--, parents want what's best for their student, and obviously if, you know, we know the parents reasonably well, we can have conversations with them, because we've got limited numbers of students, you don't have to have those terrible five minute conversations with a parent, then the bell rings, then you get the next one, you know, it's you can spend, you know, longer than that and the door is always open to parents, and we always had a policy where parents could come in and talk to teachers or middle managers or senior managers if they need to at any time if they're concerned. And so that was the--, that's been good. But yeah, I mean parents just want the best for their students, they don't always think that what the school provides is the best, sometimes their views are different, perhaps they think the students can achieve more, which is one of the reasons why, you know, the head who's just left, she wanted to show that we were aspirational, that was her key word, I mean if I describe Jude, aspiration, you know, we shouldn't be a school that doesn't require the best of our students, and we want them to be aspirational and resilient and develop all the sort of things that you'd expect mainstream kids, and that was the right thing, the right way to go. Obviously when you're dealing with students with special needs, you know, you've got some, particularly at St Philip's, you've got some that you'd think, my goodness, why is this child here, they should be in the mainstream, they're so able. And as much as possible we would try and transfer students back and we did do that, successfully, from time to time, back to the mainstream. But the more often you--, you've got a child in a segregated environment, especially one they enjoy and they're doing well in, the less they often want to go back, it's sometimes that's not true, because students are all different. But I know, well I can think of two cases of a student most recently who's been desperate to leave St Philip's because he's got a real sense of stigma and that's something I can't, you know, I know that exists, and I know that our students feel that sometimes, because living in their environment, living in their community, on their estate, whatever it is, other kids who go to the local secondary, local primary will say, "Which school do you go to?" and when they say, "Oh I go to St Philip's," they'll say, "Oh that school, that's a school for--," whatever it is, and they'll feel terrible. And I know that some of our students, have that, and they experience that, at the same time I know there are others who are desperately keen not to go to the mainstream, they want to stay within a segregated environment which they enjoy, where they feel cared for and sometimes you have to get a shoehorn to get them out [all laugh]. And yeah, it can still work, as long as the transfer's good, and as long as the receiving school have got all the information they need and they've got the right kind of care and support system in place, and it does work sometimes, not always.

IA: That's very good. I don't know if any one of you has any question?

JK: Do you want to ask about proudest achievement?

IA: Oh yeah, I'm going down--, yeah, okay, alright. So what has been your proudest achievement in your career [all laugh]?

RS: My proudest achievement in my career? [Pause]. I--, do you know what, I mean it's going to sound ridiculous isn't it, but I am proud of the fact that when I go down the shops or when I go into Surbiton or when I go into Kingston and when I see an ex-student of mine, almost always they'll want to say hello, they'll want to, you know, they'll be happy to see me, and you know, we can have a conversation, can't really remember their names these days, but most of the time, you know, I will know who they are and that it's proud, I'm proud that they're, you know, that they'll want to, because it's not always, you know, so sounds ridiculous. In terms of what I've achieved, I think when I got to St Philip's I sort of, I mean I--, it was almost like falling in love, I hadn't expected quite what I got, and not to put too fine a point on it, I was going through not only a professional moment in my life where I was questioning what I was doing in teaching, but I was also going, at that stage in my life I was going through personal changes as well, in my situation, and it all came to a bit of a head, so St Philip's was almost like, you know, the stability. And so when I got there, in the--, by the mid '80s I'd decided, you know, this is it, this is--, I'm--, I don't really want to go anywhere else, you know, I'm quite happy being--, doing what I'm doing and of course as things progressed and as education changed and St Philip's changed and the local authority put new changes in place, I managed to ride the wave upwards, but it wasn't--, I was never ambitious to do that, it's never something I wanted, you know, that all the opportunities have virtually come to me on a plate, so I've been very lucky from that point of view. So what I was able to do I think was to take what I--, that my love for the school, and my love for the kids in the school and my devotion to the school, and I'd have to be honest, I was devoted, which is why I'm still linked to it now. Is to continue that and to sustain that through the changes that happened, you know, that there is still an essence from what there was then, to what there is now, you know, some of the things like animal care, I mean I wasn't at all responsible for that, bringing that back, something that the head wanted to do but, you know, that has been restored, that was there when I started, we lost it for 30 years but it's come back [laughs]. And I'm seeing some of the things, you know, that were there before, you know, being part and parcel of the school, and there are lots of things, I mean there are lots of things that I've really enjoyed, well particularly on the creative side which I'd very much like to see develop a bit more. I'm a bit concerned that, you know, we've got to almost like a fact based [inaudible 01:04:53] sort of system, you know, and creativity, one of the things--, funny how things change isn't it, swings and roundabouts of educational thought, but during the '90s, you know, being creative, you know, giving kids opportunity to explore painting and poetry and drama and music and all of that, was you know, that was the sort of thing that we should be doing, and then numeracy and literacy came in and the national curriculum was always there and it's now about chasing, you know, your knowledge and your skill and do you see what I'm saying?

IA: [Laughs].

RS: I feel I'm rambling a bit now [laughs].

IA: No, you're not [laughs]. When exactly did you retire?

RS: I retired last July, I--, yeah, it was an interesting--, well with the school celebrated its diamond jubilee in 2014, it was--, had been established in '54 and that was my jubilee year as well, I was 60, so I'm as old as St Philip's, so we were planning some special celebrations and we were working towards it and then during the summer half term I was [laughs] at the top of the stairs, got some friends coming around, or relatives of my wife's coming around for a barbeque and I fell down the stairs, and basically tore the tendon in my knee. And very painful for 20 minutes, and then painless after that which was amazing really but I couldn't lift my knee, I couldn't lift it. And I was enforced to have some time off, so I couldn't go to school,

and so all this that I was very much involved in, the jubilee celebrations, I mean that's one of the things that I did, I was an organiser of events, I was the events manager if you like in my role as deputy. It had to be given to other people, and I just turned up on the night sort of thing which was terrible for me, I felt terribly guilty. But the time that I spent off made me think, okay, I'm 60 now, you know, just hurt my knee, is it about time to retire? And so I'd--, that sent, you know, got balls rolling in my head which the subsequent year when I returned, I'm glad to say I managed to return to school, none the worse for my knee or anything, and the following year was quite a difficult year, quite a lot of, I mean we were talking about changes, the academic and the pastoral and all of that, quite a lot of the colleagues that I'd been working with for many many years decided that they were going to resign, or retire, or just leave. And yeah, that was not a happy year, and I have to be honest, when I started the following year I missed them quite a lot, these people I'd worked with, so last year I spent some time with--, we're very fortunate the school to have a counsellor for staff, somebody who--, you know, by a counsellor, I don't mean a psychiatrist, not sort of that sort of thing, but somebody who'd just talk through any issues you might have with students or with curriculum or with, you know, with management or whatever, and you know, listen mainly and then perhaps say something that might set a ball in motion you think. And I said--, he wanted to try a new style of counselling, and he said, "Are you up for it, have you got anything you'd like to talk about?" and I said, "Well actually, yes I have, yeah, let's talk about retirement," and we spent a few sessions talking about that, and that made me think, because of some of the things he suggested like reading around it, you know, finding out whether I was financially solvent which I was, whether that would be a good thing to do. So I decided then in January last year, that that would be it, and yeah. And then the head, 'cause we'd previously had conversation about me seeing the new head in because she was going to retire first, and I said, "I'm sorry, I'm jumping the gun, I'm going first," I'd decided actually to continue till this summer, that was going to be my finish, but yeah, I thought, right, now that the time has come to go. And I'm glad I did, I don't regret it, I've loved my time at St Philip's and I'm still linked with the school through Special Olympics and through the parents association and I still work for the school doing a bit of driving for them and some travel training for students, which is what I'm doing, and some admin, I do some basic admin for them, so about ten hours a week is what I do. So I've still--, I mean that's partly because I didn't want to end up with nothing, you know, because of the years that I've spent there. And it was a good thing to do, the books tell you anyway to not immediately have complete break [all laugh]. Anyway, so that's why I left, sorry I can't remember what the question is now.

IA: Yeah, I asked when you retired, okay [all laugh], you've mentioned--, I was going to ask, but you've mentioned, apart from the Special Olympics, you still do a few things.

RS: Yeah.

IA: But apart from being involved with St Philip's, what are your plans now that you've retired, any other things?

RS: My plans, I mean one of the things--, I mean I said to you before that been very very devoted to the school and it's sort of subsumed my life, you know, my involvement in the school, so certain things that I enjoyed when I was younger I sort of put on the back burner, so I've started to take them back up again, I've joined a choir which I'm involved in, I wanted to volunteer so I'm involved in that, as I say with Special Olympics, I'm doing--, I'm involved in a course at the moment, I'm doing a couple of courses, one on mindfulness and trying to learn a bit about and which is interesting, I go to the gym, when I left St Philip's, sorry to say I was two and a half stone heavier than I am now, so I've managed to lose a bit of weight. And yeah, so I'm doing a bit more sport and a bit more active than I was, I've started doing a little bit of writing although I've had to put that on the back burner because I'm a typical man, I can only focus on one thing at one time and I can't just pick up the pen and do half an hour and then, you know, wander off, so yes I do that. I've been trying to--, my mother is still alive and I visit her on a regular basis, she lives--, still lives in Peterborough, so there's that. And what else do I do? Oh yeah, I do ballroom dancing with my wife, and yeah, and I'm considering doing a little bit more--, I'm very conscious through the church that I'm attached to, that there are a lot of--, there's a lot of need out there, particularly amongst the elderly and I've had links in the past with the sort of elderly organisations and just, you know, chatting with people, befriending

and things like that and I've been thinking whether that's something I can fit into my schedule as well, so and I have a family and they expect me, sadly they expect me now I'm retired to do things around the sure, so oh blimey, unbelievable [all laugh]!

IA: Okay, generally, what are your hopes for the future regarding special education needs? What will you want to see happen?

RS: What would I want to see happen?

IA: Hmm.

RS: I really think that every single child, special needs or not, is an individual, and I would love to see a system where each child can feel supported and not that they go into a machine and come out, now in special needs I think that hasn't been true at St Philip's, I think in the mainstream that's more true and that that's a worry, that it does worry me, I don't think necessarily at primary, but certainly at secondary and that worries me. I would be very concerned if special education, you know, went down that route, but I don't think it will because of the very nature of the people that are involved in it, their heart is for the young people, and for their families. And so I think, you know, that that's okay. It would concern me if the-, well funding's changing all right across the board isn't it and it would concern me if the facilities and the funds that are available to support young people didn't exist, so that would be a concern. My hopes is that every child, regardless special needs or not, achieves the potential that they can possibly achieve, that their school years are happy years, as well as being aspirational years, and they don't like me--, I mean we haven't talked about my schooling but I didn't enjoy my schooling, it's amazing that I became a teacher really because I really didn't enjoy being a student at school until I got to sixth form and then I wasn't really a student, I was just sort of a person who enjoyed their social life and attended college during the--, during certain hours [laughs]. But yeah, I mean I would--, yeah, I suppose I want the very best for young people, and for kids with special needs, I think the provision, oh yeah, hello, the provision is pretty good up to 16, I think in some cases after that and probably more than I am aware of, it's less good, so I am very concerned about what happens to young people as they become young adults, and then they move into middle age at whatever it is. And what opportunities and provision is there for them, and where the support systems are for them. And I am--, I mean conversation I had with a parent when I went on the Special Olympics, the last competition, it made me think that, you know, here are some parents who are thinking, we are going to be looking after our young person, for the rest of our lives, but we're not going to be here forever, what happens to him then, you know, what happens when that we're not there, you know? And they are genuinely worried about that, about because there's no apparent support system that's available to him. And yet, talking with a young person who--, somebody again who works for--, who--, an ex-student at St Philip's who's done really reasonably well, not sure they're working, but they're certainly involved in a lot of voluntary stuff, and he's living in--, with other students, ex-students at St Philip's in--, it's not--, well it's a cared for place, but there's nobody living in, you know, support, community support sort of thing, and he's getting on really well, and he's enjoying his life, which is great, you know? Which is smashing. So it's horses for courses, but yeah, it's about levels of support for those people who need it, and then it's there, and my concern would be that that level of support, particularly once they leave school and college isn't there, and that you know, parents are required to be--, but they won't be there forever, so that would my concern.

IA: Thank you very much.

RS: Thank you.

IA: Anything?

JK: That was really wonderful.

RB: Thank you.

RS: Well I've waffled on for an hour.

JK: No, you haven't at all.

IA: Not at all.

RS: Forgive me whoever's listening to this [all laugh].

JK: No, something I just wanted to clarify, so who--, what was the name of the head when you became deputy head?

RS: The head when I became deputy head was a lady called Helen Goodall, so the head's that I've known, the head that I arrived was John Ainley and he was the artist, very good artist who lived in Leatherhead. Helen Goodall was head of key stage four and she had been working very much on the vocational side of things, and she became the next head, that was in '90s, in the '90s, '94, '95? She stayed till about 2006, '7, when Jude Bowen came in, and Jude took over, and now we've got Ben Walsh, and he's just taken over, he's started in April.

JK: Thank you very much. Did you have any questions?

RB: No.

JK: Lovely, well thank you, I think we can stop the tape there, thank you so much.

End of recording [01:17:45]